■ News / A2

Pagdanganan named tourism secretary

■ World / A8

Haiti rebels seize city

■ Lifestyle / C4

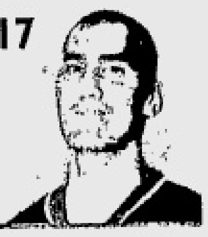
Up-lifting talk with cosmetic surgeon

■ Business / B1

Peso rallies as BSP warns speculators

■ Sports / A17

My first game as a bench warmer



PDI, GMA 7 to host presidential debate

GMA NETWORK and the Philippine Daily Inquirer will host a presidential debate next month to enlighten the public on the competence and character of those aspiring for the highest office of the land.

To be aired simultaneously on all radio stations of GMA Network, the debate will allow the presidential candidates to present their

PDI/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Tuesday, February 24, 2004 ★★ 42 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 78 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Tanong ng Bayan INQTV

Edsa I: Pakana ba ng Kano?

A. OO. Ayaw na nila kay Marco's
B. HINDI. It was proudly Philippine-made
C. EWAN. Posible, pero hindi ko alam

Text INQTV <letra ng inyong sagot> sa 2915 at abangan ang sagot ng bayan mamayang alas-10 ng gabi, sa INQTV on ABC-5.

RP, US troops focus on $4-B oil project

War games begin in Palawan, 5 areas

PHILIPPINE and US military planners are using a mock attack by Islamic militants on the vital Malampaya gas fields in the South China Sea to test their skills during two weeks of war games that started yesterday.

Official documents seen by Reuters showed the exercise in Palawan would focus on repulsing an attack on the offshore platform, a $4.5-billion project and the single largest foreign investment in the Philippines.

The project is operated by a consortium led by a unit of the Royal/Dutch Shell group. Shell Philippines Exploration BV and Chevron Texaco have a combined 90-percent stake (45 percent each) in the consortium. The state-run PNOC Exploration Corp. holds 10 percent.

The Malampaya field, which has recoverable reserves of 2.5 trillion cubic feet (70.8 billion cubic meters) of gas and 85 million barrels of condensate, now fuels three power stations with a combined capacity of 2,700 megawatts.

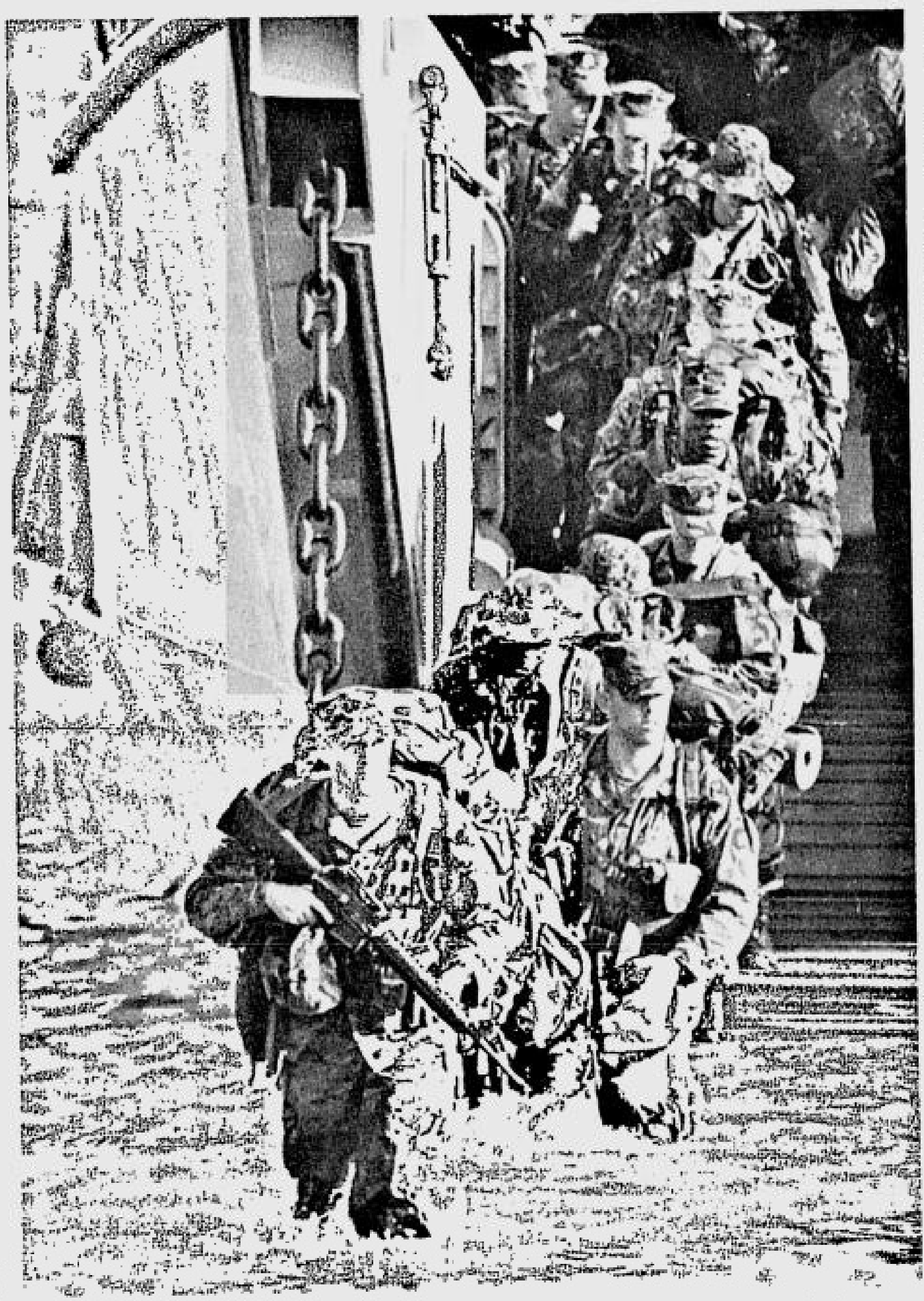
Palawan is near the potentially mineral-rich Spratlys, which are being claimed in whole or in part by the Philippines, Brunei, China, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez welcomed the joint military exercises in Palawan.

"The exercises will help ensure security of this major energy infrastructure, which provides 30 percent of the Luzon grid's power requirements," Perez said, adding his department had been quietly asking for the war games to be conducted in the area.

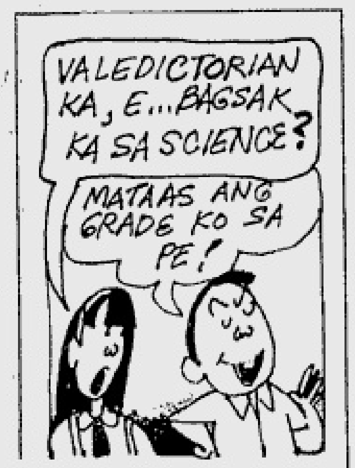
The annual "Balikatan" (shoul-

RP, US/ A4



US MARINES come ashore during the start of the "Balikatan 2004" war exercises in Ternate, Cavite, and five other sites.

AP



VALEDICTORIAN KA, E... BAGSAK KA SA SCIENCE?
MATAAS ANG GRADE KO SA PE!

Failing marks can make a valedictorian

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

EVEN STUDENTS with failing marks can now aspire to be valedictorians and salutatorians in public schools.

The Department of Education has relaxed the system of selecting honor stu-

FAILING/ A4

COMMENTARY

Lessons from 'Miracle of Edsa'

By Jose Concepcion Jr.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The author is a former member of the Edsa People Power Commission and former secretary of trade and industry. He is the national chair of the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections.)

TOMORROW, we will be celebrating the 18th anniversary of the People Power Revolution. From that shining moment in our nation's history, we must pause and reflect on its lessons today.

There is a lot of cynicism among the Filipino people today—an oft-quoted survey says that about 20 percent of the country's population would leave the country if they had the chance. This means not only loss of confidence but also the loss of

LESSONS/ A14

US sets terms for lifting CPP terrorist tag

By Alcuin Papa

WASHINGTON is not likely to grant Manila's request to have the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, taken off a US list of terrorist organizations. The CPP and NPA must first renounce terrorism and sign a peace agreement with the Philippine government.

Only under these conditions would the CPP and NPA be taken off Washington's blacklist, US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli yesterday told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo.

After four days of peace talks in Norway earlier this month, peace negotiators of the Philippine government and the communist-led National Democratic Front issued a joint statement calling on the United States, the European Union, Canada and Australia "to support the efforts of the parties in resolving the outstanding issue of the 'terrorist' listing."

The NDF had threatened to pull out of the peace talks unless it won a government commitment on the issue.

"A request from a government is not enough in itself. We have to assess objective facts. We would certainly reassess the entire situation," Mussomeli said.

The CPP and NPA "would have to demonstrate that they have indeed—not only in words but in deeds—renounced that type of terrorism," he added.

Mussomeli said Washington was still "a long way" from lifting the terrorist tag on the CPP and NPA, noting that Manila had yet to submit such a formal request despite its joint communique with the NDF.

"It's a matter of will, not time. They have to reach a peace accord. They have to stop terrorism. Once they have done that, certainly we (will) reassess who is and who is not in the terrorism list," he said.

Mussomeli said it was "infantile" for the NDF to demand that the CPP and NPA be removed from the US blacklist.

"It's like a child asking to fly to the moon. If they wanted it, it is easy enough to do. All they have to do is give up terrorism. Makes no sense to simply ask," he said.

The NPA earlier this month threatened to attack US troops taking part in two weeks of joint military exercises with Philippine troops that began yesterday.

Washington placed the CPP, NPA and CPP founder Jose Maria Sison on its terrorist list in 2002 after the Macapagal administration backed the US-led global war on terror in the

US SETS/ A4

Columnist recounts brush with FPJ

By Tarra Quismundo and Christine O. Avendaño

"DEFINITELY black progapaganda."

And Malacañang is also definitely behind it, the camp of Fernando Poe Jr. said yesterday, fuming over a resurrected 36-year-old complaint of manhandling, harassment and grave threats against the actor by a movie journalist.

In a word, Poe's personal campaign manager Sen. Vicente Sotto III said the story, then and now, was "untrue."

Earlier in the day, People's Tonight entertainment editor Franklin Cabaluna, 60, called a media conference at the National Press Club to "warn the public against the real FPJ, who is running for the highest office in the country and is gaining headway in his campaign."

In so doing, Cabaluna set the record straight on what had become a veritable legend in the local entertainment industry: that in 1967, a very vexed and very drunk Poe had accosted him at a party and urinated on him.

Told in retrospect, yesterday's version of the story had a restaurant near the Manila Zoo as the setting of Cabaluna's "most traumatic experience."

The journalist recounted that an inebriated Poe "abducted" him from a party of the newly formed Philippine Movie Press Club, brought him to the parking lot of the restaurant near the zoo, and berated him for something "negative" that he had written about the movie star.

COLUMNIST/ A4

ROGER MARGALLO

CABALUNA: Anybody but Poe.

EDSA I TIMELINE

Day Three, Feb. 24, 1986

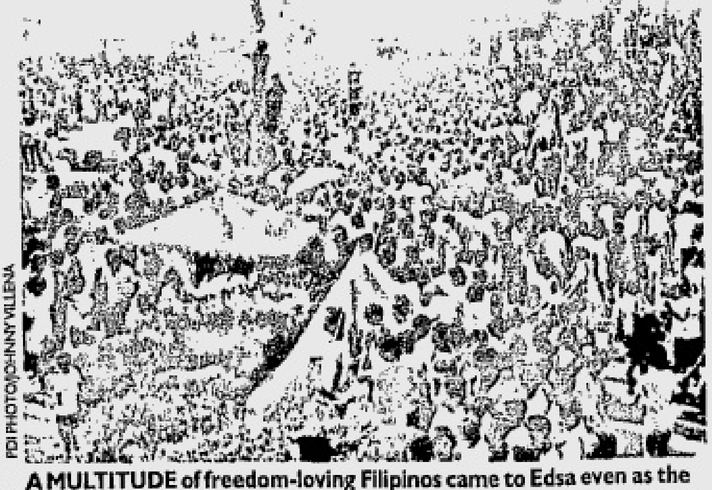
MORE than half of the Filipinos today, the 20-somethings and younger who number about 43 million, have no memory at all of the first Edsa People Power revolt that occurred between Feb. 22 and 25, 1986. Hence, this chronology, distilled from books and PDI archives, about what has been called the "real" Edsa.

By PDI Research

12:20 A.M.: June Keithley starts broadcast over dzRJ (christened Radyo Bandido dzRB) by playing "Mambo Magsaysay."

1 a.m.: Church bells ring and word spreads that President Ferdinand Marcos is planning attack. People again converge on Edsa; tires are set ablaze and sandbags and

DAY THREE/ A14



PDI PHOTO/JOHNNY VILLENA

A MULTITUDE of freedom-loving Filipinos came to Edsa even as the strongman Ferdinand Marcos ordered a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

MARCOS MILLIONS

'Ruling true will of Marcos'

By Arlyn de la Cruz, *Contributor*
Editor: Leah Makabenta

(Last of three parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Every post-Marcos government, from Aquino to Estrada, had sought a compromise agreement with the heirs of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the belief that it would be the most speedy way to prise the fabled ill-gotten billions from the stranglehold of the Swiss gnomes guarding them.

That none of these deals ever prospered was—apart from the sincerity or cupidity of the governments involved—largely because of the bad faith of Imelda Marcos, according to one of the former First Lady's disenchanted "blind followers."

Cherry Cobarrubias, the head of the True Marcos Loyalists Headquarters who had a bitter falling-out with Imelda in October 2002, said Imelda never was interested in a settlement and was loath to give up even a small part of the Swiss bank deposits. This is her story.

BY 1997, Imelda Marcos thought she had found a new way to hold on to the ill-gotten money.

According to Cherry Cobarrubias, negotiations with the Ramós administration began to fall through in 1997 when Imelda found out that popular movie star Joseph Estrada would run for president.

She said Imelda told her she believed she could get a better deal with Estrada in Malacañang.

"She said, 'Cherry, let's just use delaying tactics. That Ramos

RULING/ A14

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Luzon, Bicol Region and Eastern Visayas.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legaspi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/24/04

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Obet appointed tourism secretary

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PAGDANGANAN: Palace denies he was booted out of DAR.

MALACAÑANG denied speculations that Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan was booted out of the Department of Agrarian Reform after a group of farmers demanded his ouster, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

Bunye also disclaimed reports that Malacañang wanted somebody else to manage the bulk of the recovered Marcos ill-gotten wealth which is principally for agrarian reform beneficiaries but allegedly could be used for the President's campaign.

"No, that's not true. Secretary Pagdanganan was appointed to the Department of Tourism because there is a very urgent need to have a permanent tourism secretary and one of the qualifications for the job was a good marketing background," Bunye said.

Pagdanganan replaced Richard Gordon who is running for senator under the administration's K-4 coalition. Pagdanganan was initially included in the 12-member senatorial slate.

Bunye said Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza also wrote the President asking her to immediately appoint a permanent DOT head for the following reasons:

- To fill up the position of the three-man panel to the RP-US civil aviation talks.
- To implement the open skies policy for cargo at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport and the Subic International Airport.
- To implement the use of the Davao International Airport as an alternate entry point for the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines-East Asean Growth Area and Asean cargo and tourism business.

Mendoza's memo was dated Feb. 20, the same day the President signed Pagdanganan's appointment to the DOT.

Asked if Pagdanganan can cope with the transportation-related aspects, Bunye said: "I believe what is important here is to project the Philippines as a tourist destination and to get a big share of the cargo and other businesses which could maximize the utilization of the DIA, Subic and Davao airports."

Bunye said the implementation of the agrarian reform program, which would be funded by the Marcos Swiss deposits that are now being transferred to the treasury, would remain on track despite Pagdanganan's replacement.

"The disposition of the Marcos wealth is very clearly delineated. This wealth is principally for agrarian reform beneficiaries and part of it (would go to) human rights victims as soon as the appropriate legislation is (passed). The implementation of that order can be made without much difficulty," Bunye said.

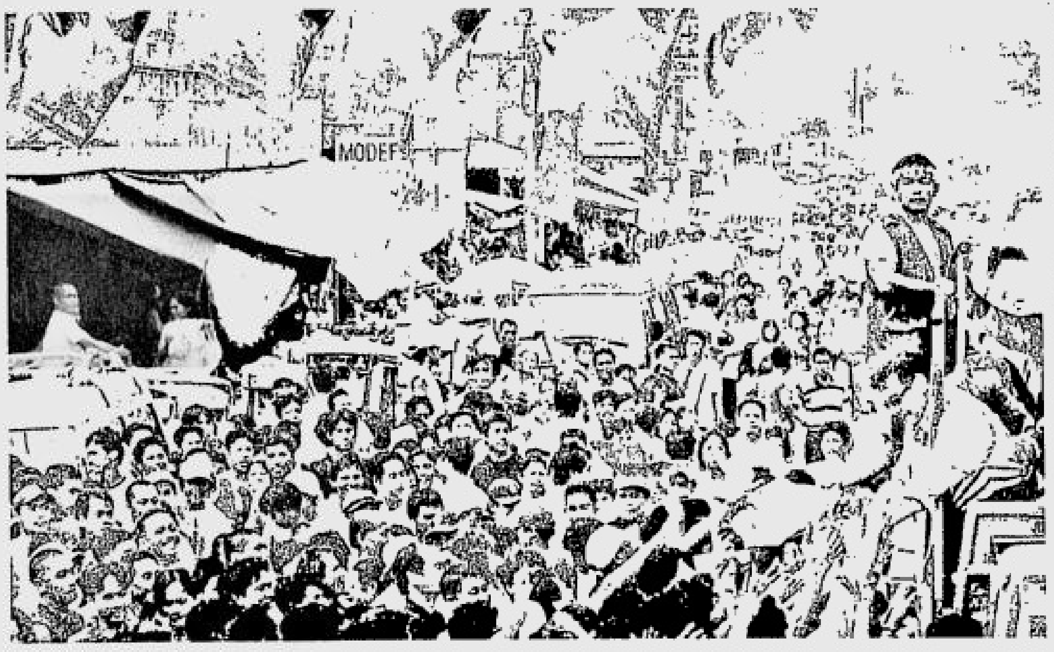
The President designated DAR Undersecretary Jose Mari Ponce as officer-in-charge but Bunye said a permanent replacement would still be named.

"She (the President) has not given any indications (on a permanent secretary) yet, but the fact that one is appointed OIC means this is a very temporary engagement," he said.

Bunye said Dean Barbers, who was designated OIC of the DOT, would go back as full-time head of the Philippine Tourism Authority.

Army document cited to prove Poe Filipino

By Philip C. Tubeza



PRESIDENTIAL candidate Fernando Poe Jr. shakes hand with supporters during a motorcade in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, before the KNP grand rally.
EDWIN BACASMAS

FERNANDO Poe Jr. was recognized from birth by his father thus making him a natural-born Filipino citizen eligible to run for President of the country.

This was the contention of Poe's lawyer Estelito Mendoza in a 32-page position paper he presented yesterday to the Supreme Court, which is hearing a disqualification case against the actor-turned-presidential candidate on the question of citizenship.

Mendoza cited a Philippine Army document dated Dec. 22, 1947 on which Allan F. Poe had listed as one of his children a boy named Ronnie.

The Affidavit for Philippine Army Personnel showed that Fernando R. Poe (Allan Poe's screen name) was married in January 1939 "at Malate Church" to Bessy Kelly and that one of his children was "Ronnie" (Poe's nickname), who was then five years old.

Mendoza noted that the date of the wedding was seven months earlier than Poe's birthday of Aug. 20, 1939, proof of the actor's legitimate birth.

The document, however, contradicted the marriage contract submitted earlier by Mendoza himself to the Commission on Elections, which heard another disqualification case against Poe. The latter certificate showed that Poe's parents were married on Sept. 16, 1940, or over a year after Poe was born.

Mendoza also did not explain why in the army affidavit which was made out in December 1947, or eight years after Poe was born, Poe Sr. had written down that his son Ronnie was only five years old at the time.

Mendoza said he had been "advised" that Poe Sr. and Kelly were married prior to the date on their marriage certificate.

"That marriage was kept secret because he was then a budding movie actor—until they bore children, Elizabeth and Ronnie, when the marriage had to be made public," he said in a footnote in his position paper.

Mendoza cited the evidence after four "friends of the court" took the position before the Supreme Court that it was up to Poe to prove that his father had acknowledged him as his son at birth, thus making him a natural-born Filipino citizen eligible to run for President.

In his own 44-page position paper which he submitted to the Supreme Court yesterday, petitioner Victorino Fornier reiterated that Poe was not a natural-born Filipino citizen. The Solicitor General supported his position.

Fornier said Poe was not a natural-born citizen because the actor was not a legitimate child. He disputed "friend of the court" and constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas' contention that the previous SC rulings Fornier had cited to support his position had been insufficient.

"The undeniable fact that respondent FPJ was an illegitimate son of his father and the American Bessie Kelly shows that he could not be a natural-born Filipino citizen, even assuming *arguendo* that his grandfather and father were citizens of the Philippine Islands," Fornier said.

"While it is true that it is not a child's fault that he is illegitimate, it is however not the fault of the Filipino people that their Constitution requires their President to be a natural-born citizen, which an illegitimate son with an alien mother is not," he said.

In his 24-page position paper, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo noted that Poe had not presented evidence to show that he was the son of Allan F. Poe.

"There is no reliable proof of that fact ... Poe has not presented any proof that he was acknowledged by his father either in the birth certificate, last will and testament or in any other authentic writing," Benipayo said.

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Date/Time/Day	MCLE Credit Units/ Subject Classification	Lecturer	Subject
March 12, 2004 1:30 - 4:45 pm	(3) Legal Ethics	Justice Ruben T. Reyes	Problem Areas in ° Legal Ethics
March 13, 2004 8:00 - 10:00 am	(2) Trial & Pre-trial Skills	Justice Noel G. Tijam	Trial Techniques
March 13, 2004 10:15 – 12:15 pm	(2) Trial & Pre-trial Skills	Justice Noel G. Tijam	Pre-Trial Skills: Civil and Criminal Cases
March 13, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 pm	(2) MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Law as a Means of Social Control	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta	Rebellion: Causes and Consequences
March 13, 2004 3:15 - 6:15 pm	(3) Legal Ethics	Justice Hector L. Hofileña	Updates in Legal Ethics
March 19, 2004 1:00 - 4:00 pm	(3) Alternative Dispute Resolution	Dean Custodio O. Parlade	International and Domestic Arbitration
March 19, 2004 4:15 - 6:15 pm	(2) Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez	Legal Writing
March 20, 2004 10:00 – 12:00 pm	(2) MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Technology and the Law	Justice Regalado E. Maambong	Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents & Fingerprinting
March 20, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 pm	(2) Updates in Substantive and Procedural Laws and Jurisprudence	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval	Updates in Criminal Law
March 20, 2004 3:15 - 5:15 pm	(2) Updates in Substantive and Procedural Laws and Jurisprudence	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan	Updates in Labor Law
March 26, 2004 1:00 - 4:00 pm	(3) Updates in Substantive and Procedural Laws and Jurisprudence	Justice Regalado E. Maambong	Updates in Constitutional Law and Election Law
March 26, 2004, 4:15 - 6:15 pm	(2) MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Environmental Law	Prof. Oswald B. Lorenzo	Environmental Law
March 27, 2004 8:00 - 10:00 pm	(2) Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy	Justice Jesus M. Elbiñas	Oral Advocacy
March 27, 2004 10:15 – 12:15 pm	(2) Alternative Dispute Resolution	Prof. Mario E. Valderrama	Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
March 27, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 pm	(2) International Law	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma	Practice and Procedure in the Bureau of Immigration & Updates in Deportation and Immigration Laws
March 27, 2004 3:15 - 5:15 pm	(2) Updates in Substantive and Procedural Laws and Jurisprudence	Judge Ed Vincent S. Albano	Updates in Remedial Law
TOTAL	36		

Deadline of Registration & Payment: March 05, 2004 - 5:00 P. M.
Venue: Antipolo Room, Valle Verde Country Club, Inc.
Capt. Henry Javier St., Bo. Ugong, Pasig City,
Metro Manila (*beside PSC Complex [formerly ULTRA]*)

Date/Time/Day: March 12, 19 & 26, 2004
1:00 – 5:15 pm
March 13, 20 & 27, 2004
8:00 – 5:15 pm

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PEACE TALKS

Palace favors dropping of charges vs Moro rebs

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PEACE talks between the government and Muslim separatist rebels would move faster if criminal charges against top guerrilla leaders were dropped, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

Local courts have already suspended the trial of cases against Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels in connection with a spate of deadly bombings in the South last year, he said.

"We believe the peace process would be better served if these cases against the MILF leaders are eventually dropped, but this will entirely depend on the court," Bunye said in a statement.

However, Bunye denied that Malacañang cut a deal with detained Moro leader Nur Misuari in exchange for his support of the candidacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We can be sure that Secretary Bert Gonzales was misquoted about that matter because this has never been discussed in any meeting of the Cabinet. I believe this report—that Misuari will be freed—has no basis," Bunye said.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales also denied that he offered freedom to the former ARMM governor in exchange for his support of Ms Macapagal.

Gonzales said he promised to make sure Misuari would be given a fair trial. He made the statement on Feb. 3 when he and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. visited Misuari in his detention cell in Sta. Rosa, Laguna to "reestablish our friendship."

Misuari told Gonzales and De Venecia that he was innocent and a victim of a set-up. Misuari was charged with rebellion after his followers went on a murderous rampage in Jolo, Sulu in 2000.

"I said I would look into the case and make sure the trial would not be unfair to him," Gonzales said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

Gonzales, who used to be the President's adviser on special concerns and a back-channel negotiator with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said he had not taken his oath as the new NSA when he visited Misuari. He went there as a friend.

Gonzales said Misuari gave the Speaker a letter which stated, among others, that he favors the shift to a federal form of government. Misuari also supports the President's candidacy because of her pursuit of the peace process in Mindanao.

Bunye said the government and the 11,900-member MILF last week agreed to resume formal negotiations in Malaysia by April.

Malaysia has been hosting and mediating talks between Manila and the MILF, which has been fighting for more than two decades to set up an Islamic state in the southern third of the largely-Christian Philippines. *With a report from AFP*

It ain't summer yet, folks

By Volt Contreras

RAINSHOWERS that may have ruined the campaign schedules of some election candidates have drenched much of the country over the weekend because of the combined effects of a low pressure area over the Visayas and a cold front in Northern Luzon.

A weather expert said there's nothing odd about the drizzly spells this time of the year since summer has not yet officially started.

The country is also still feeling cold, northeasterly winds—locally called *amihan*—coming from China, Japan and South Korea, according to weather forecaster Rene Paciente.

The prevailing weather pattern may continue until March, when the *amihan* would have given way to warmer, easterly winds, he explained.

In its three-day forecast issued yesterday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the whole archipelago will continue to have cloudy skies and scattered rains and thunderstorms.

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RP, US troops focus on $4-B oil project

From page A1

der-to-shoulder) war games will also include maneuvers, live fire and other field drills by 2,652 American and 2,278 Filipino soldiers at military bases in Luzon.

Conventional Philippine and US forces resumed the exercises in 2000, after a break of about six years, to build on the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, a remnant of Manila and Washington's Cold War security partnership.

But officials said the war games had kept pace with the demands of the US-led campaign against global terror.

"Warfare is evolving," Gen. Narciso Abaya, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said at a news conference during the opening ceremony of Balikatan. "If the threat calls for an action against terrorism, you have to adjust."

Joseph Mussomeli, the charge d'affaires at the US Embassy in Manila, said Balikatan "shows the consistency and depth of the bilateral relationship and strong camaraderie between the US and Philippine military."

Washington has pledged more than $300 million in military aid to the Philippines to upgrade antiquated equipment and has been training troops facing homegrown Muslim and communist rebels, as well as regional militants such as the Jemaah Islamiyah.

But Mussomeli said Washington had no plans to reestablish military bases in the Philippines, the last of which was closed in 1992, despite efforts to reposition conventional US forces in South Korea and Japan.

About 200 military planners and civilians, including security personnel from Malampaya, will take part in a simulated attempt by Moro guerrillas, backed by JI militants, to seize an offshore platform, the documents showed.

JOAN BONDOC

ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya and US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli formally open this year's RP-US military exercises at Camp Aguinaldo.

Based on the scenario, a rare strain of malaria hits Palawan. As efforts to control the disease falter, terror groups begin to use the area for training and as a springboard for attacks.

Abaya and Mussomeli refused to discuss the nature of the exercises in Palawan.

"We do not want to discuss scenarios here. Otherwise we are telling our enemies what we are trying to practice," Abaya told reporters.

He said the security of Malampaya was a major concern of the Philippine government. "We have to say that it is a major concern. But as to whether or not the defense or security of Malampaya will fall under the purview of the Mutual Defense Treaty, that is not yet being talked about."

Mussomeli said: "We don't discuss these scenarios."

The exercises are the first time training has been conducted on Palawan, the country's most western island.

Separate civil-military operations will also be held on the northernmost island of Batanes, used most recently during the war in Afghanistan by US planes returning to Okinawa and other bases in Japan.

The Palawan stint would involve "command post exercises," or tactical exercises without troops while the Batanes activities would involve civil military operations. The Batanes group of islands is the closest part of Philippine territory to Taiwan.

The two-week exercises will also be conducted at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, Clark Air Base in Pampanga, Crow Valley in Zambales and the Marine base in Ternate, Cavite—areas used in past Balikatan exercises.

AFP officials said there would be live fire exercises in the venues of the war games except in Palawan and Batanes.

American and Filipino soldiers will build schools, wells and water tanks, and offer medical, dental and veterinary services to several poor communities in Palawan.

Capt. Rodel Dayag of the Balikatan Combined Information Bureau said engineering and civic assistance program (Encap) had started in some barangays. The medical-dental missions will begin today.

Some of the Encap projects include the construction of a school building in Barangay Sicsican and of a water storage tank in Barangay Bacungan and the rehabilitation of the city health building.

Capt. Burrell Parmer, public information officer of the US forces for the Balikatan exercises, said "the movements will be confined to Wescom (at the Camp Gen. Artemio Ricarte of the Western Command)." Soldiers going outside of the camp would be on medical or humanitarian missions, he said.

Wescom authorities said some 700 troops would take part in the exercises. Last week, some 60 American soldiers from the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Forces arrived in Palawan as part of the US forces that will join the Balikatan.

The Palawan NGO Network Inc. (PNNI), an umbrella organization of NGOs in the province, is opposing the exercises.

"We think that it encroaches on the sovereignty of the nation," PNNI executive director Cleofe Bernardino said of the joint military exercises.

She said the pressure from local government units and NGOs not to hold live fire activities because of environmental considerations had a great effect on the decision to tone down activities in Palawan.

Despite protests from nongovernment organizations, the city council in Puerto Princesa has expressed full support for the exercises.

In a resolution, the council said the joint military exercises would strengthen the ties between US and Philippine forces. Both the city and the provincial governments put up unusually large streamers welcoming the troops.

Teams from the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement have been activated to monitor the exercises.

"We would always do our best to ensure that our local communities are safe and not inconvenienced," Foreign Undersecretary for Special Concerns Rafael Seguis said. The Department of Foreign Affairs chairs the VFAcom.

On Feb. 13, a low hanging telephone wire got in the way of one of the tall container vans being ferried by the trucks of the US troops in Puerto Princesa.

The wire snapped and hit a motorcyclist, hurling him and his two female passengers from the motorcycle. The driver suffered a wound in the neck and a sore leg. His two female passengers had minor bruises and contusions. They were brought to a nearby hospital. *Reports from Reuters, Alcuin Papa and Jerome Aning in Manila; and Jofelle P. Tesorio and Geraldford P. Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

US sets . . .

From page A1

aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

Washington's key allies, including the European Union, Australia and Canada, followed suit. The Philippine military said the blacklisting led to the drying up of foreign funds sustaining the 35-year-old communist insurgency.

Military officials last week warned President Macapagal-Arroyo against helping communist guerillas convince the United States to drop them from its blacklist of foreign terrorist groups.

"They still continue (their) terroristic activities," Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces spokesperson, said the lifting of the terrorist tag would "open the taps" again after Western governments cut off foreign funding for the Maoist insurgents.

"Definitely, it will have an effect in our counterinsurgency drive. We will be making our counterproposals to this because we believe that this will greatly hamper our mandate to cleanse our countryside of NPA atrocities and influence," Lucero said.

He said the lifting of the terror tag should only be done after the rebels had committed to sign an agreement to end their insurgency.

NDF warning

For his part, NDF chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni yesterday said the peace negotiations would bog down if the government insisted on the NPA's surrender.

"No way will the New People's Army surrender and yield its firearms to the government," Jalandoni said in a radio interview from the Netherlands.

Jalandoni said such a provision was included in the final draft of the peace accord, which was handed to him by the government's chief negotiator Silvestre Bello III.

The NDF negotiator said the provision would violate the Hague Joint Declaration that the two sides signed in 1992.

"We were not consulted about these changes," he noted. "If they insist on surrender, the (peace) negotiation will continue to drag because definitely we will reject it. This is totally unacceptable."

The government was showing "its arrogance and shortsightedness, taking advantage of the situation that they might be able to trap us to yield. But this will not happen," he said.

For the talks to move forward, Jalandoni asked the government to implement social and economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, agreements on human rights and international humanitarian law, release of political prisoners, and compensation for victims of human rights under the Marcos dictatorship.

Another round of talks has been scheduled next month. *With a report from Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Failing marks can . . .

From page A1

dents in a move that caught school officials off-guard.

"But that does not apply to public schools!" a superintendent blurted out upon hearing of the new rules on Friday, during a dialogue at the DepEd office.

Last year, the department imposed a stricter grading system, as a result of which many students are expected to get drastically lower grades, or maybe even flunk. But while the tightened grading system is still in place, the new directive makes sure the slots for honor students will be filled.

In a memo dated Feb. 20, Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus removed certain requisites for potential honor students set by his own Order No. 22 dated March 25, 2003.

The old memo said a candidate for honors should not have a grade lower than 85. It also ruled out transferees. But in the new Order No. 9, the education chief said honor students should be chosen based solely on academic standing.

"Regardless of whether or not they have grades lower than 80, the top two students in academic subjects shall be ranked to determine the valedictorian and salutatorian," De Jesus said.

In addition, he ruled that any student "may be a candidate for honors even if he is a transferee to the school."

This particular provision drew intense reaction from the principals and school superintendents during Friday's meeting. It was over this that, forgetting his place, the superintendent told De Jesus that Order No. 9 went against established practice. His colleagues chuckled, but De Jesus ignored the outburst.

Other principals followed suit with their own objections, until Education Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz exploded: "The problem is you always wait for instructions from the department. We provide the (guidelines) but in the end it is you, as principals, who will decide which student will be the valedictorian and the salutatorian."

This didn't address the issue, of course, but the protests subsided—for the meantime.

Order No. 9 covers public elementary and high schools, but De Jesus urged even private schools to adopt the new rules.

Columnist recounts brush with FPJ

From page A1

He said he had described Poe's acting in a recent film as "lousy" and "wooden." But through the years, reports had been consistent about the content of a blind item in Cabaluna's column that had incensed Poe—something that quite literally belittled the actor's manhood and capacity to sire a child.

The actor had often been quoted in the past as saying he could only take so much criticism: "You can always say my acting is lousy ... but it makes me mad when I'm hit below the belt."

Cabaluna said the tongue-lashing at the zoo ended with a scarcely veiled threat: "You have no respect for movie stars. Do you want me to bury you here?"

He was trembling by then, the writer recalled, and could do little than tremble some more, even when Poe urinated in front of him.

In short, the actor did not pee on Cabaluna; he just did not turn his back. And when it was all over, the writer said, Poe offered to take him home. He refused, of course.

To this day, Cabaluna told reporters, he can't look at the exact spot where the incident took place.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, the writer said: "Would you like a drunkard or someone as violent (as Poe) for president?" He was retelling the story, he said, because "my conscience bothered me."

Cabaluna is also the editor of Insider magazine which, like People's Tonight, a tabloid, is published by the government-run Journal Group of Publications.

FPJ was one of the perennial subjects of Cabaluna's movie columns in the Daily Star and Pilipino Star from 1967 to the early 1970s. "I did not write anything for or against Erap," he said. "See what happened. I cannot keep quiet now that Ronnie (Poe) is running. If he wins, the country will be messed up all the more."

For instance, he said, voters should be told about Poe's drinking habits. "As long as he's drinking, even till the wee hours, no one in a party can leave."

In short, the next president of the country should be "anybody but Poe," Cabaluna stressed. Even FPJ's closest friend, deposed President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, might have been better, he said. "At least, I'd never seen him as drunk (as Poe)."

Pressured?

Sotto charged that former Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco, now the Journal publisher, had long been "pressuring" Cabaluna into reviving the issue against Poe. Yesterday's press conference was an indication that the columnist had caved in to the pressure, Sotto said.

In a phone interview, the senator said he had been told of a colleague of Cabaluna's at the same tabloid who was fired for not cooperating in the planned demolition job against Poe.

Capco denied Sotto's allegation. "Franklin is his own man," he said in a phone interview. "Whatever he did is his own business." *With a report from Tumbok*

PDI, GMA 7 to host presidential debate

From page A1

platform of government before a national audience. Those living outside the country can access the debate through Inq7.net.

Invitations to the debate were sent to the six presidential candidates last week after former Sen. Raul Roco, standard-bearer of the Alyansa ng Pag-asa, challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo and actor Fernando Poe Jr. to a televised debate.

Three presidential candidates have so far confirmed that they will join the debate, which has been approved by the Commission on Elections.

Malacañang said Ms Macapagal was ready to face not just Roco but also Poe and the other candidates in a national debate.

Poe tried to brush the challenge aside, saying, "debates divide the people. And they are just talk. They don't really do anything to help the masses." Responded Roco: "Maybe he doesn't understand what democracy is—it really means talking like a man.

"We haven't seen a single thing he has done. Only his movies. He has done nothing for education, for housing, for health," Roco said of Poe.

When Poe, in turn, challenged his rivals to a daylong debate in a Manila slum, few people took him seriously.

"We shouldn't treat this like show biz," said a spokesperson for Ms Macapagal, adding that she was willing to explain her programs but only in a proper debate.

Concrete terms

Ms Macapagal yesterday challenged, albeit indirectly, Poe to lay down in concrete terms how he planned to bring from reel to real his vision for the country.

In a statement, she said: "Whoever represents himself as the champion of the masses must be able to show how he intends to achieve his goals within the realities of actual governance."

Although she did not specify anybody from the opposition, it was obvious that the President was referring to Poe, a high school dropout and popular movie actor.

"It does not matter so much if a candidate is educated or not. What matters is his capability to translate vision into reality," Ms Macapagal said.

The President said she would only agree to a debate with her rivals for the presidency if "the subject would be relevant to the welfare of the average Filipino."

"I am not going to waste my time debating slogans. I want to talk about specific programs," she said.

Ms Macapagal said she was not "belittling" any of her opponents. "I just want the people to be enlightened so they can choose wisely."

Noise of local politics

Roco yesterday pressed for the holding of the debate early next month—and ahead of the start of the campaign period for local candidates—to avoid the "noise of local politics." The campaign period for local candidates officially starts on March 25.

The former education secretary said holding the debate in late March or in April was a bad idea because by that time national issues would have been "drowned out" by local issues.

"We should do the debate now, when the focus is still on national issues," he said in a phone interview. "The media should press for the holding of a debate early so the people will know (the candidate's platform of government). When the local campaign period starts, it will become more confusing."

March 8 vs April 13

Roco proposed that the faceoff be held on March 8.

"Next week is fine, like March 8, which is International Women's Day," he said as he urged the media and the Church to work out the holding of a public debate as soon as possible.

He rejected the planned April 13 presidential debate to be sponsored by the Comelec and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV).

PPCRV media consultant Edmund Tamayo said, on GMA Network's "Unang Hirit" newscast yesterday, that the debate would be an opportunity for Filipinos to listen to the candidates "talk meaningfully about economic, political and social concerns."

Tamayo said the council and the Comelec would meet representatives of the presidential candidates at the poll body's Manila headquarters today to finalize details of the debate. Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said he would attend the meeting.

Should the Comelec push through with the April 13 date, Roco said civic organizations "can continue on their own."

He said Ms Macapagal and Poe should have no reason to worry about an early date because the only issues at stake "are their qualifications, records and what they propose to do for the country."

Roco welcomed Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson's decision to join the debate. He initially did not invite the opposition senator and evangelist Eddie Villanueva to debate because they appeared at the forum hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines in Makati City last week.

"The three of us are open to the idea of debates; we don't hide anything from the people," he said.

Pro-administration congressmen expressed confidence that Ms Macapagal would shine in a presidential debate, regardless of location and issues.

Full grasp

Representatives Aurelio Umali (Nueva Ecija), Benasing Macarambon (Lanao del Norte) and Mayo Almario (Davao Oriental) said Ms Macapagal would stand out because of her full grasp of the issues and her leadership experience.

"Even if the debate were held today, it is the President who will carry the day. She knows all the issues well because her administration has a program and vision for multisectoral concerns," Umali said.

Umali scored Poe for saying that a presidential debate was mere talk. "The debate is the best time for candidates to prove they talk sense and have a clear grasp and understanding of the issues," he said.

Macarambon, a former commander of the Moro National Liberation Front, said that Ms Macapagal had the guts and the wit to overcome her rivals.

Unlike other contenders who present only "empty promises," Ms Macapagal is offering continuity of programs that have greatly improved the economy, according to Macarambon.

"Instead of attacking the President in their campaigns, her rivals should face her and prove that they have more than promises to offer the people. Enough of the mudslinging and scripted performances of her rivals," Macarambon said.

Topics

For his part, Almario said the people would be able to compare all the presidential candidates in a debate and see Ms Macapagal is the best choice.

"The President's rivals have opted for a negative and shallow campaign marked by motherhood statements and scripted appearances. The campaign has turned into a contest of substance versus personality," Almario said.

Roco earlier said the debate should tackle all public issues, but yesterday he identified three major topics—education, the economy and foreign affairs.

"First, education. That's the future. No. 2, the economy. An economy can only improve if you have honest, credible leadership. All studies say that. Not money, but leadership. When the leadership is credible, then the country will progress.

"No. 3 is foreign affairs because the world has shrunk." *With reports from TJ Burgonio, Michael Lim Ubac and Cynthia D. Balana*

Lacson defends Zubia role in campaign

By Norman Bordadora
and Christian V. Esguerra

BIÑAN, Laguna—Presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said there was nothing irregular about Chief Supt. Francisco Zubia and other active Philippine National Police officers being involved in his campaign since they were members of the official security detail assigned to him.

Zubia's presence in the Lacson campaign had been noted, even as the PNP leadership reiterated its official policy of being nonpartisan when it came to politics.

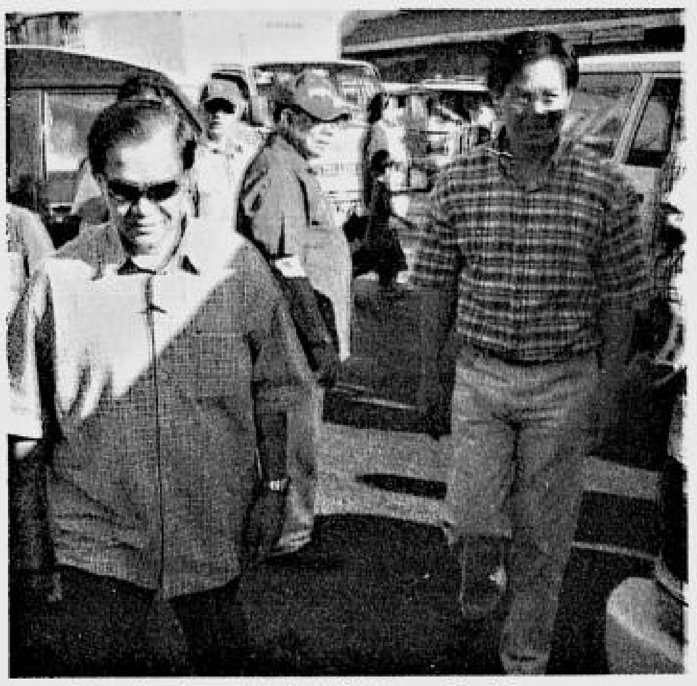
Lacson said the assignment of active police officers to his campaign had been approved by the Department of Interior and Local Government and by the Commission on Elections.

"They have been officially detailed. They have a letter-order from the DILG, these officers who have been detailed to my office," said Lacson. "They are authorized."

"But they are not necessarily involved in the campaign... they handle security," he added.

Zubia, for his part, said his assignment to the Lacson camp had been approved by the Comelec even before the presidential campaign period started on Feb. 10.

He said Lacson had written the PNP asking that he [Zubia] be detailed to his security team. Zubia said the PNP and the Comelec both approved the senator's request.



CHIEF Supt. Francisco Zubia (at left) with presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson on the campaign trail in Biñan, Laguna, Monday. JESS YUSON

"Besides, I'm on leave and have been on floating status for three years now," said Zubia, who is Lacson's "mistah" in Philippine Military Academy Class '71. When President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power, Zubia was assigned to PNP Headquarters Support Services, a job, many had noted, akin to being placed in the "freezer."

Zubia, security coordinator for the Lacson campaign, said the candidate of the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino had received threats, including one that said he was going to be assassinated.

"The threat is always there considering that he is running for the highest position in the land," said Zubia, adding the government's intelligence community knew of the threats on Lacson's life.

"These are raw reports. We're still verifying them while taking the necessary security measures," Zubia added, when asked where the threats were coming from.

The PNP urged Lacson to ask for additional security if there was a plan to assassinate him.

"He should come to us so we could act on it officially," said Director Avelino Razon Jr., PNP director for operations.

Lacson, meanwhile, appears to have sewn up the support of a good number of retired officers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the PNP.

The Lacson supporters had yet to name their group but some wanted Association of Generals for Ping (Ag-ping) to counter Fernando Poe Jr.'s Association of Generals for Poe (Agpoe), according to an active PNP general identified with Lacson.

Compared to Poe's supporters, however, Lacson's were "quality generals" capable of rallying other officers, active and retired, behind their candidate's presidential bid, the source told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

"Ag-ping" is reportedly headed by Director General Recaredo Sarmiento (ret.), the longest-serving PNP chief, who has been very visible at Lacson's campaign rallies.

Palace still hopeful GMA, Bro. Eddie could 'join forces'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PREACHER and presidential candidate Eddie Villanueva could still "join forces" with President Macapagal-Arroyo and have a "participation" in government, said the President's campaign spokesperson Mike Defensor.

Just two days ago, Malacañang dismissed the supposed 2.8 million faithful who came to the proclamation rally of Villanueva at the Rizal Park on Sunday. Villanueva is founder and leader of the Jesus Is Lord religious group.

While Defensor avoided saying "withdrawal from the presidential race," if Villanueva rejoined the President, it would be the "natural course" and this would take place "before the (May 10) elections."

"In the end, there is still the possibility of helping one another, of unifying. We hope to see a unification," Defensor said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

"There could be a participation in governance for him and his group," Defensor said.

As of now there is nothing yet "in black and white" but he said Villanueva could help in the moral and spiritual aspects of government.

Villanueva earlier disclosed that the President's allies have offered him a position to head a proposed Presidential Commission on Moral Affairs and the use of land for JIL purposes in return for his pulling out of the presidential elections. He said the commission would be given a P50-million budget.

Defensor denied that the offer was made at all. Villanueva, a staunch ally of Speaker Jose de Venecia and Ms Macapagal, used to hold prayer rallies for the President. Villanueva announced his decision to run for the presidency a month after Ms Macapagal went back on her word that she would not run.

This prompted a tearful Ms Macapagal to meet with Villanueva for several hours trying to dissuade him from running. She was accompanied in the meeting by De Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye dismissed the huge pro-Villanueva rally, by far the biggest crowd gathered by a presidential aspirant and far, far bigger than any of the provincial rallies for the President's campaign.

"This is something that he has done before. It's not extraordinary," Bunye said in a briefing.

Swing voter in presidential polls defined by consumption patterns

PAPA buys cigarettes by the stick, mama is hired out as a maid abroad and the kids' role models are movie and television stars.

The swing voter in the 2004 presidential election is defined by its consumption patterns in much the same way as the "Nascar Dad" and "Soccer Mom" of the United States and the "Mondeo Man" of Britain.

But with annual incomes below $4,000, Filipino families do not have the same buying power.

Nonetheless the idiosyncrasies of these lower D and E classes—the "*masa*," or masses—have revamped factory floors, forcing manufacturers to shrink unit volumes of products from milk to toothpaste to accommodate their budgets, according to US market survey firm AC Nielsen.

And they could revamp the country's government at the May 10 presidential election.

In the Philippines, "elections go where the '*masa*' goes," said pollster Mahar Mangahas.

His Social Weather Stations outfit sees the D class as the key battleground for the presidential frontrunner, popular movie star Fernando Poe, and the incumbent, President Macapagal-Arroyo, a US-trained economist and daughter of a former Philippine president.

Analysts said the vote could go the way of the 1998 presidential contest, when movie star Joseph Estrada whipped the best that the divided ruling class could offer by carrying the "*masa*" vote.

In the latest SWS poll, Poe had 34 percent of the D votes, seven percentage points ahead of Ms Macapagal.

Poe also had the lead in the formidable E class—the slum dwellers and farm hands who make up the poorest of the poor.

AC Nielsen and other market research firms here say the lower classes comprise 90 percent of the population, with up to 52 percent belonging to the D class.

Less than a million out of the country's 82 million people are considered rich.

Multimillionaire high school dropout Poe is piling up points, telling his campaign rallies that the Philippines has only three problems—"breakfast, lunch, dinner," a reference to the enormous poverty here.

In the plantation economy of the country after World War II and US colonial rule, the lower classes did not have such a key say in the country's governance, University of the Philippines sociologist and INQUIRER columnist Randy David said.

They voted according to the command of landlords and other power-brokers who gave them jobs or other favors in return. "There are no command votes anymore," David said.

With at least 48 percent of the population now living in urban areas, television, mobile telephones and the Internet have diminished the traditional landowning oligarchy and pushed media heroes into the spotlight, political risk consultant Jose Leviste of Polistrat International said.

Perhaps aware of this, Ms Macapagal convinced broadcast star Sen. Noli de Castro to abandon his own presidential bid and become her running-mate.

More importantly, David said, cash flowing back to the countryside from the mass export of Filipino labor from the early 1970s has emancipated the poor.

More than seven million now work abroad, with annual remittances of $8 billion accounting for about 10 percent of the gross national product. *AFP*

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2F RCBC Bldg.	3F Regina	6F Panorama	Basement 1&2	27F Atlanta Ctr.	27F Trafalgar Plaza	GF Zeta Bldg.	6F Adriatico Square	2F Bldg. A	1032 Arnaiz Ave.	Restaurant Ave.	2F Annex Bldg.	2F Times Square
Zapote-Alabang Rd.	Garden II	Bldg., Rizal Ave.	Ayala Center	#31 Annapolis	Salcedo Village	Salcedo St.	Adriatico ,Manila	Mandaluyong	cor. Hernandez St.	Marcos Hi-way	Quezon City	Rizal Hi-way
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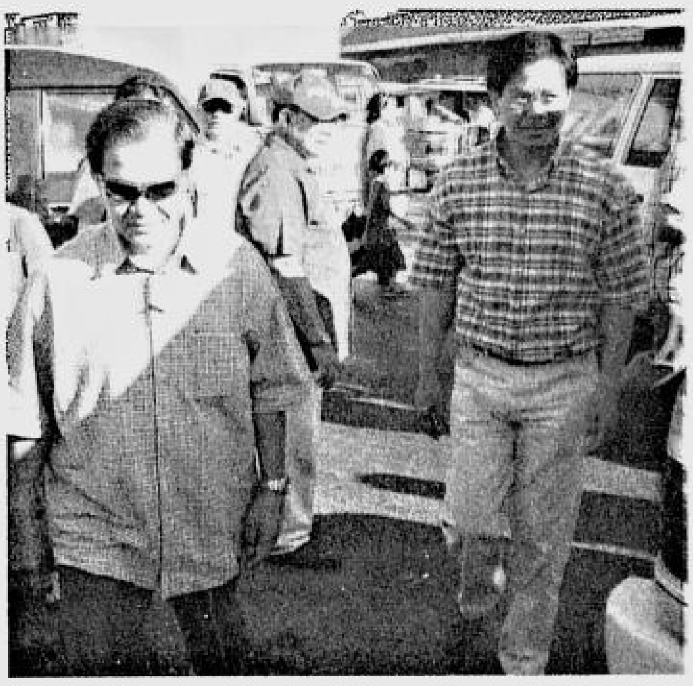

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The Lacson supporters had yet to name their group but some wanted Association of Generals for Ping (Ag-ping) to counter Fernando Poe Jr.'s Association of Generals for Poe (Agpoe), according to an active PNP general identified with Lacson.

Compared to Poe's supporters, however, Lacson's were "quality generals" capable of rallying other officers, active and retired, behind their candidate's presidential bid, the source told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

"Ag-ping" is reportedly headed by Director General Recaredo Sarmiento (ret.), the longest-serving PNP chief, who has been very visible at Lacson's campaign rallies.

Palace still hopeful GMA, Bro. Eddie could 'join forces'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PREACHER and presidential candidate Eddie Villanueva could still "join forces" with President Macapagal-Ar royo and have a "participation" in government, said the President's campaign spokesperson Mike Defensor.

Just two days ago, Malacañang dismissed the supposed 2.8 million faithful who came to the proclamation rally of Villanueva at the Rizal Park on Sunday. Villanueva is founder and leader of the Jesus Is Lord religious group.

While Defensor avoided saying "withdrawal from the presidential race," if Villanueva rejoined the President, it would be the "natural course" and this would take place "before the (May 10) elections."

"In the end, there is still the possibility of helping one another, of unifying. We hope to see a unification," Defensor said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

"There could be a participation in governance for him and his group," Defensor said.

As of now there is nothing yet "in black and white" but he said Villanueva could help in the moral and spiritual aspects of government.

Villanueva earlier disclosed that the President's allies have offered him a position to head a proposed Presidential Commission on Moral Affairs and the use of land for JIL purposes in return for his pulling out of the presidential elections. He said the commission would be given a P50-million budget.

Defensor denied that the offer was made at all. Villanueva, a staunch ally of Speaker Jose de Venecia and Ms Macapagal, used to hold prayer rallies for the President. Villanueva announced his decision to run for the presidency a month after Ms Macapagal went back on her word that she would not run.

This prompted a tearful Ms Macapagal to meet with Villanueva for several hours trying to dissuade him from running. She was accompanied in the meeting by De Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye dismissed the huge pro-Villanueva rally, by far the biggest crowd gathered by a presidential aspirant and far, far bigger than any of the provincial rallies for the President's campaign.

"This is something that he has done before. It's not extraordinary," Bunye said in a briefing.

Swing voter in presidential polls defined by consumption patterns

PAPA buys cigarettes by the stick, mama is hired out as a maid abroad and the kids' role models are movie and television stars.

The swing voter in the 2004 presidential election is defined by its consumption patterns in much the same way as the "Nascar Dad" and "Soccer Mom" of the United States and the "Mondeo Man" of Britain.

But with annual incomes below $4,000, Filipino families do not have the same buying power.

Nonetheless the idiosyncrasies of these lower D and E classes—the "*masa*," or masses—have revamped factory floors, forcing manufacturers to shrink unit volumes of products from milk to toothpaste to accommodate their budgets, according to US market survey firm AC Nielsen.

And they could revamp the country's government at the May 10 presidential election.

In the Philippines, "elections go where the '*masa*' goes," said pollster Mahar Mangahas.

His Social Weather Stations outfit sees the D class as the key battleground for the presidential frontrunner, popular movie star Fernando Poe, and the incumbent, President Macapagal-Arroyo, a US-trained economist and daughter of a former Philippine president.

Analysts said the vote could go the way of the 1998 presidential contest, when movie star Joseph Estrada whipped the best that the divided ruling class could offer by carrying the "*masa*" vote.

In the latest SWS poll, Poe had 34 percent of the D votes, seven percentage points ahead of Ms Macapagal.

Poe also had the lead in the formidable E class—the slum dwellers and farm hands who make up the poorest of the poor.

AC Nielsen and other market research firms here say the lower classes comprise 90 percent of the population, with up to 52 percent belonging to the D class.

Less than a million out of the country's 82 million people are considered rich.

Multimillionaire high school dropout Poe is piling up points, telling his campaign rallies that the Philippines has only three problems —"breakfast, lunch, dinner," a reference to the enormous poverty here.

In the plantation economy of the country after World War II and US colonial rule, the lower classes did not have such a key say in the country's governance, University of the Philippines sociologist and INQUIRER columnist Randy David said.

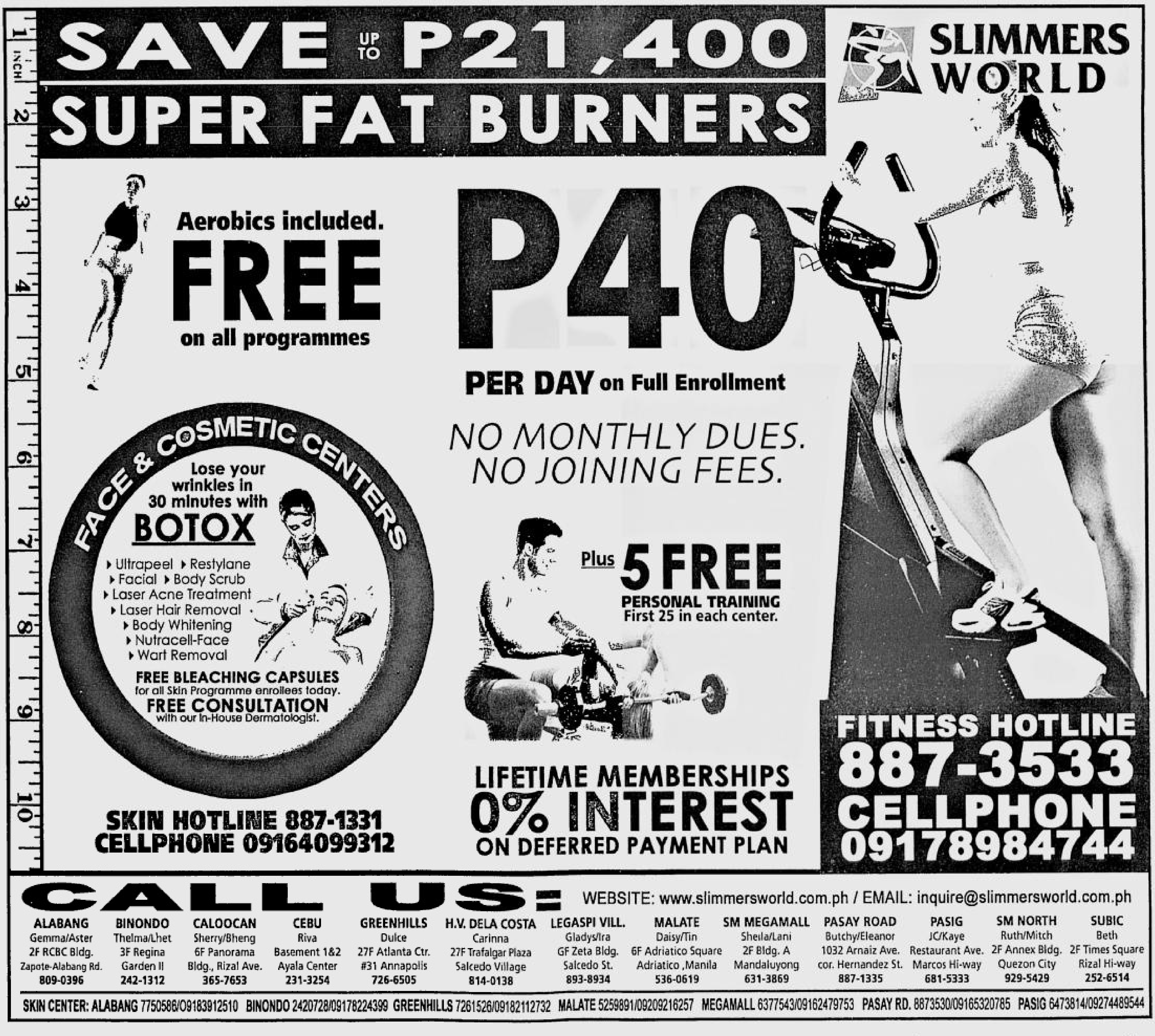
They voted according to the command of landlords and other power-brokers who gave them jobs or other favors in return. "There are no command votes anymore," David said.

With at least 48 percent of the population now living in urban areas, television, mobile telephones and the Internet have diminished the traditional landowning oligarchy and pushed media heroes into the spotlight, political risk consultant Jose Leviste of Polistrat International said.

Perhaps aware of this, Ms Macapagal convinced broadcast star Sen. Noli de Castro to abandon his own presidential bid and become her running-mate.

More importantly, David said, cash flowing back to the countryside from the mass export of Filipino labor from the early 1970s has emancipated the poor.

More than seven million now work abroad, with annual remittances of $8 billion accounting for about 10 percent of the gross national product. *AFP*



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MARCOSES FOR POE

'Solid North' lawmakers pick GMA over FPJ

**By Frank Cimatu
and Leoncio Balbin Jr.**
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CANDON CITY—The Solid North has decided to endorse President Macapagal-Arroyo. Ironically enough, the Marcoses, whose father—the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos—was the founder and beneficiary of Solid North, said they would support Fernando Poe Jr.

Twenty-three members of the Northern Luzon Alliance signed a resolution supporting the candidacy of Ms Macapagal. The influential bloc, composed of representatives from the North and those who trace their roots to Ilocos, signed the resolution after a special meeting on Feb. 11.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson, alliance president, said the endorsement represents four million votes. The signatories were headed by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, also president of the Liberal Party.

Others who signed were Representatives Mauricio Domogan of Baguio City; Elias Bulut Jr. of Apayao; Laurence Wacnang of Kalinga; Salacnib Baterina of Ilocos Sur; Arthur Celeste, Amado Espino, Generoso Tulagan and Conrado Estrella III, all of Pangasinan; Celia Taganas Layus and Manuel Mamba, both of Cagayan; Edwin Uy and Faustino Dy III, both of Isabela; Junie Cua of Quirino; Solomon Chungalao of Ifugao; Luis Bersamin Jr. of Abra; Roque Ablan Jr. of Ilocos Norte; Roy Pilando of Mt. Province; and Ernesto Pablo of the party list Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives.

Also present during the meeting were Representatives Manuel Ortega of La Union, Mark Cojuangco of Pangasinan and Rodolfo Albano of Isabela.

Alliance members who did not endorse Ms Macapagal were House Minority leader Carlos Padilla of Nueva Vizcaya, Giorgidi Aggabao of Isabela and Imee Marcos of Ilocos Norte.

Padilla remained loyal to presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson while Ortega and Cojuangco would be supporting Poe.

Singson said that even with Padilla's stand, the alliance would support him in his bid for senator because they had agreed to support whoever runs for senator in their group. The alliance might also support senatorial candidates with Ilocano roots.

The late President Marcos was credited for creating the Solid North, which always delivered the votes for him. Among the three regions that comprise Northern Luzon, only the Cordillera lawmakers seemed to be solid for Ms Macapagal.

5 Muslim congressmen want computerized polls for ARMM

By Martin P. Marfil

FIVE Muslim Mindanao congressmen have called for the implementation of automated elections in their area, saying it would minimize electoral fraud.

The lawmakers said tabulation of votes at the precinct level takes at least eight to 24 hours leaving teachers physically and mentally exhausted. They said this could lead to errors especially with the long list of candidates.

At the same time, they said that canvassing of votes at the city, municipality and provincial levels takes weeks to complete.

"It is precisely this delay that offers opportunities for *dagdag-bawas* to thrive, particularly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which is the traditional "basket" of additional votes for dishonest candidates," the congressmen said.

The petition was signed by Representatives Hussin Amin of the 1st District of Sulu, Munir Arbison of the 2nd District of Sulu, Faysah Dumarpa of the 1st District of Lanao del Sur, Benasing Macarambon of the 2nd District of Lanao del Sur and Guimid Matalam of Maguindanao.

The Commission on Elections gave journalists copies of the petition.

The lawmakers acknowledged that the 1996 ARMM elections, which featured the use of counting machines, was not without its "challenges" because of the environment and inadequate features of the machines.

But despite this, they said the elections were "successful enough" to warrant serious consideration of its implementation on an expanded scale.

"The use of counting machines... can and will revolutionize our traditionally cumbersome and fraud-ridden vote-counting and canvassing system—a fact that has been proven in the 1996 ARMM elections," they added.

The Comelec has also been pushing for the implementation of selective automation after the Supreme Court voided the P1.3 billion-counting machine contract.

But this is being opposed by some sectors, like the National Movement for Free Elections, pointing out that they cannot understand how Comelec would still be able to use its counting machines—even for selective automation—because of the court decision.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, February 24, 2004
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	Jas 4:1-10
Gospel:	Mk 9:30-37

Jesus and his disciples made their way through Galilee; but Jesus did not want people to know where he was because he was teaching his disciples. And he told them, "The Son of Man will be delivered into human hands. They will kill him, but three days after he has been killed, he will rise." The disciples, however, did not understand these words and they were afraid to ask him what he meant.

They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, Jesus asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they did not answer because they had been arguing about who was the greatest.

Then he sat down, called the Twelve and said to them, "If someone wants to be first, let him be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child, placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, "Whoever welcomes a child such as this in my name, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me but the One who sent me."

Commentary

When we are in the presence of death everything looks different from before. At family funerals we say to our cousins, "We shouldn't wait for a funeral to bring us together; we should meet more often!" But then we go our ways and we don't meet till the next funeral—or wedding. There's a solemnity about death that puts everything in a different perspective; many of our ordinary excitements and disappointments look a lot smaller than they used to. And as for our ambitions!

Jesus had just spoken about his imminent death. Then he asked the disciples, "What were you discussing?" The gospel says, "They did not answer because they had been arguing about who was the greatest."

It's the ego that has to stake a claim to being the greatest. It's a false identity, so everything can threaten it; therefore it's always on high alert. Our true being makes no such claim; quite the opposite. Jesus sat down with them and patiently explained. "If someone wants to be first, let him be last of all." (Other translations say, He must make himself last of all.) To illustrate what he said, he put a little child before them. Our true being looks out at the world with wonder instead of criticism and competition, and it looks up at God with wordless trust.

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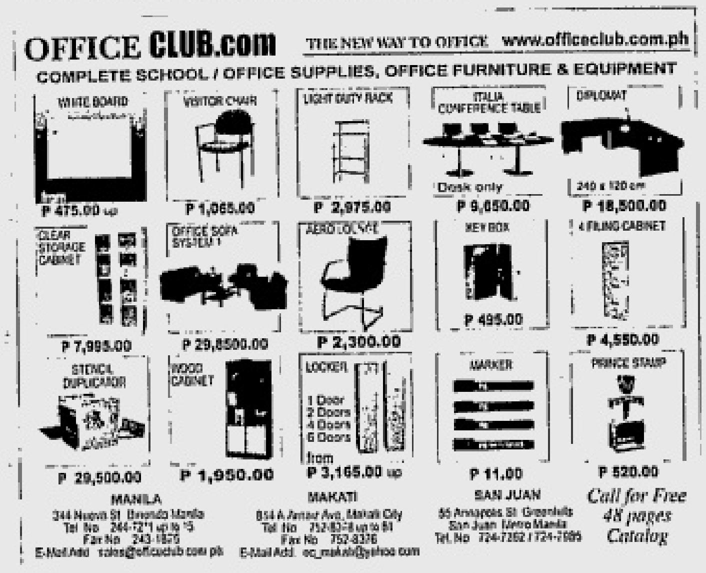

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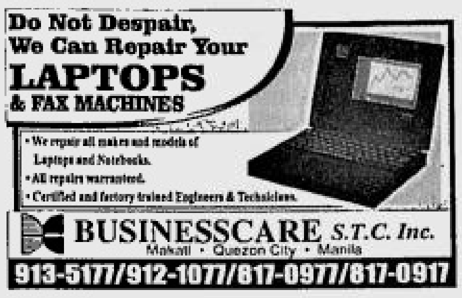

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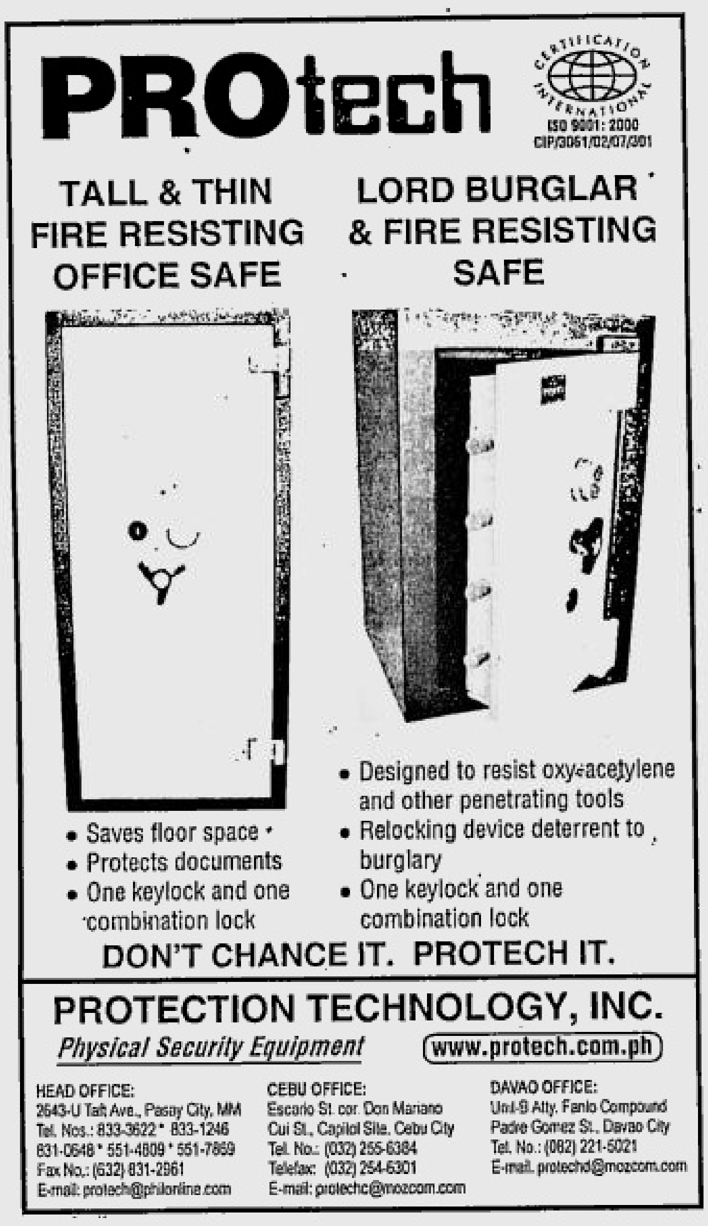

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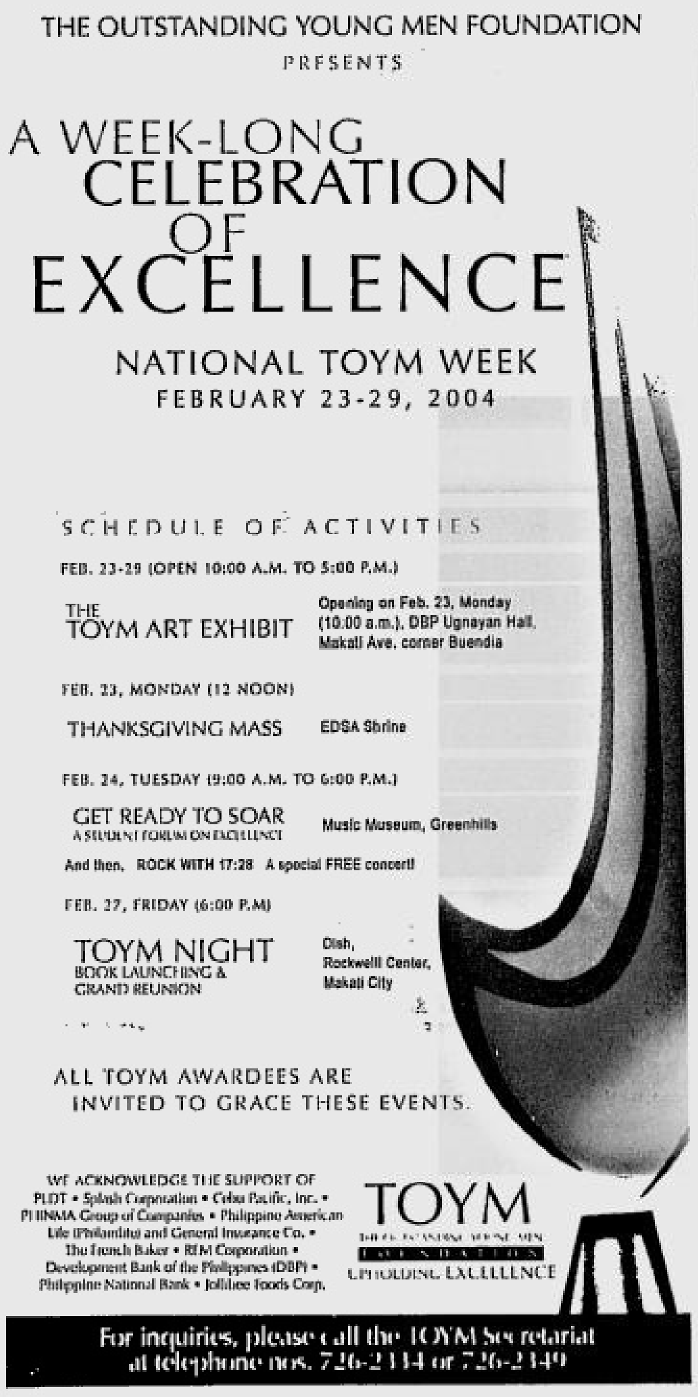

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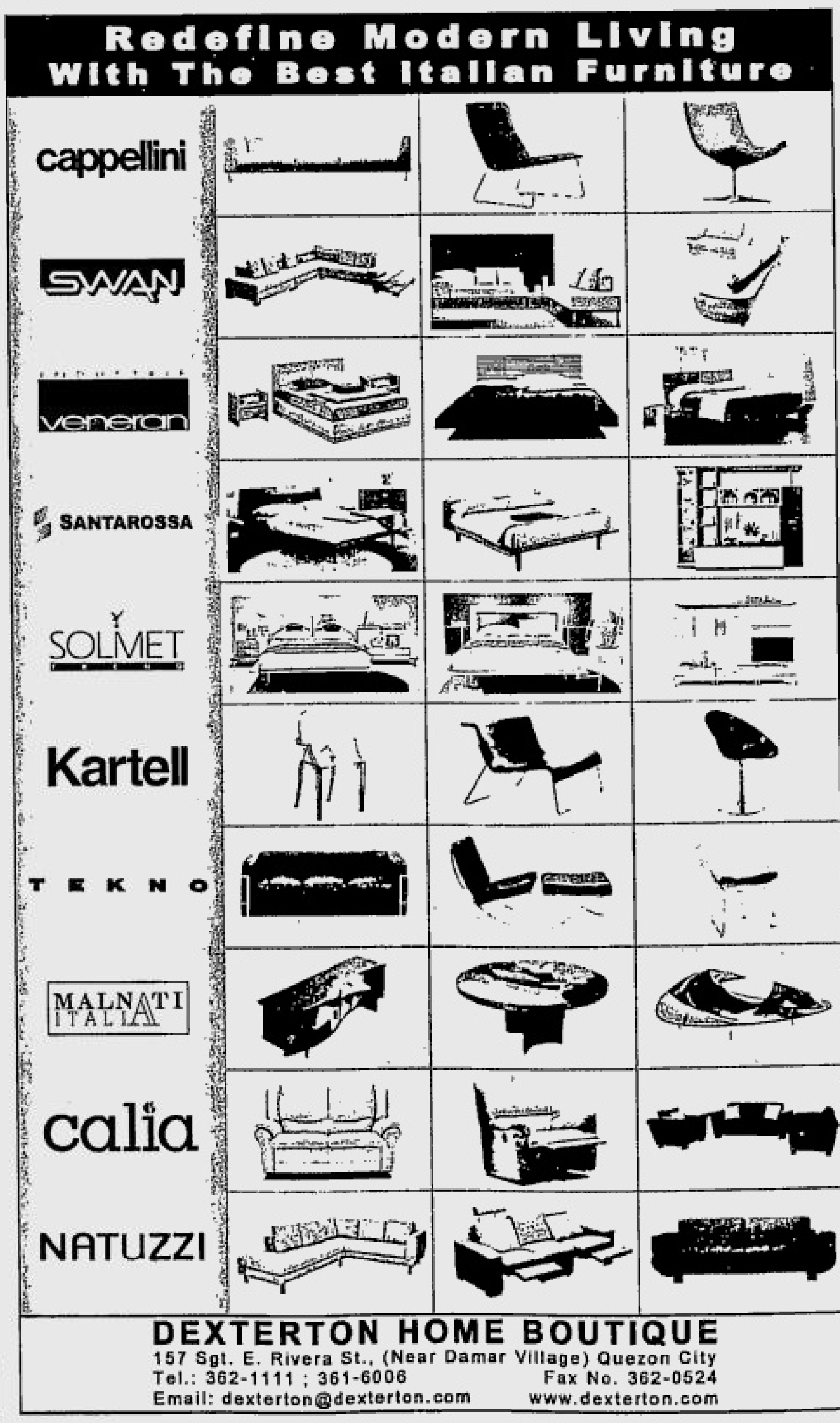

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Da King's men cancel Ayala march

By Christian V. Esguerra

SUPPORTERS of Fernando Poe Jr. have abandoned their plan to stage a massive protest action on Ayala Avenue, Makati, because of favorable arguments given by the *amici curiae* on the disqualification petition against the presidential aspirant.

"*Nabuhayan kami sa mga opinyon nila* (We found hope in their opinions)," said Arnold Obina, convenor of the People's Alliance for Truth and Justice (PATJ).

Obina was referring to the argument of retired Supreme Court Justice Vicente Mendoza, ex-constitutional commissioner Joaquin Bernas S.J., former University of the Philippines College of Law dean Merlin Magallona and UP law professor Ruben Balane. They said that Poe's alleged illegitimacy did not prevent him from being a natural-born citizen and as such, was qualified to run for president.

With this favorable argument, Obina said PATJ and groups under the "Pro-Democracy Coalition" were suspending the big rally set this week on Ayala Avenue. The rally was supposed to urge the high tribunal not to yield to "Malacañang's pressure" on the disqualification case.

"Pressure politics is the name of the game," he told the INQUIRER. "Of course, we should know when to put or not to put pressure (on the Supreme Court)."

However, Obina warned that the 25,000-strong would push through with the rally should the high tribunal disqualify Poe in the May 10 presidential election.

Besides the PATJ, he said the rally would include the FPJ Movement headed by lawyer Manny Portes and members of the middle class who "believe that Poe's opponents have been abusing democracy with impunity."

Obina said the coalition would also stage simultaneous "pocket protests" including noise barrages and candle-lighting ceremonies nationwide.

El Shaddai flock free to choose bets, says spokesman

By Blanche S. Rivera

MEMBERS of the Catholic charismatic group El Shaddai are free to join any political rallies as its leader mulls the endorsement of a presidential candidate.

Mel Robles, spokesperson of El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, said that Velarde was more concerned about having peaceful elections amid the controversies that ushered in the campaign period.

"Bro. Mike is not inclined to endorse at the moment. He wants to examine the candidates aspiring for office first," Robles said in a phone interview, adding that Velarde was "busy praying" for the May 10 polls.

"El Shaddai members are free to follow their own political convictions," he said.

Evangelist Eddie Villanueva earlier claimed that some members of the El Shaddai and the Iglesia ni Cristo have "amazingly and miraculously" committed their support to his candidacy.

Robles, however, said that Velarde did not endorse Villanueva and that the El Shaddai leader considers only four "serious" presidential candidates, including President Macapagal, actor Fernando Poe Jr., former Sen. Raul Roco and former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson.

Robles revealed that Velarde has met with some candidates, but he refused to divulge who he has spoken with so far. Velarde has been known to endorse a presidential candidate.

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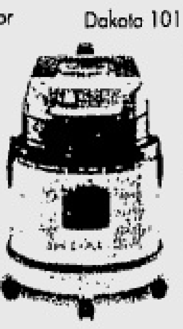

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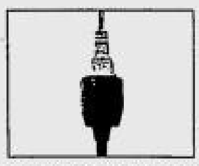

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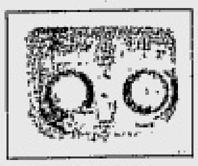
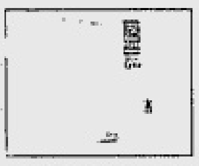


Set the timer.



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Rebels seize Haiti's second largest city

SOLDIERS from the Haitian National Revolutionary Liberation Front patrol the streets of Cap-Haitian after the front took over the police station and gained control of Cap-Haitien, Haiti, the country's second largest city on Feb. 22. REUTERS

PORT-AU-PRINCE—A nearly three-week-old insurgency in Haiti exploded on Sunday as armed rebels seized and briefly occupied the country's second-largest city Cap Haitien, wresting control from the government and complicating frantic international efforts to end the crisis.

President Jean Bertrand Aristide announced later Sunday that he was sending reinforcements to Cap Haitien. He gave no further detail.

The rebels, who are demanding Aristide's ouster, were seen leaving the far-northern city on their way to the airport, which they seized earlier, according to witnesses.

They made good on a threat to attack Cap-Haitien where at least three people were killed in heavy gunbattles with police and armed militants loyal to Aristide, and are now in control of much of Haiti's north.

Witnesses, who said the rebels had been joined by Guy Philippe, a former police chief and member of the Revolutionary National Liberation Front of Haiti, reported chaos throughout the city after some 30 heavily armed rebels stormed the local police station, freeing prisoners held there, before setting the building ablaze and organizing victory celebrations.

Impoverished city residents in this poorest nation in the Americas also looted and pillaged at Cap Haitien's port, making off with huge sacks of food and cement mix, witnesses said.

The assault had begun when the rebels arrived on the outskirts of the city in vehicles from a base in rebel-held Trou-de-Nord in the morning and quickly seized the airport there before moving into Cap Haitien proper at midday, the witnesses said.

After staging a parade through the downtown area, they withdrew in the late afternoon, vowing to return after they effectively drove police and other authorities from the city, they said.

"We will come back," insurgents told local residents, according to a witness who watched as they drove back toward the airport and beyond to meet Guy Philippe, who has pledged to expand the fight in his bid to oust Aristide.

The relatively quick withdrawal was consistent with the insurgents' strategy which has tended to be to attack cities, drive out the police, burn police stations and then leave. Highly mobile, the rebels then frequently return to prevent the authorities from re-establishing control.

At least 61 people have now been killed since Feb. 5 when the rebels, who vowed on Friday to move on Cap Haitien and the city of Saint-Marc this weekend if Aristide did not step down, launched their insurgency by taking the northwestern town of Gonaives.

Saint-Marc, with a population of about 160,000, lies between Gonaives and Port-au-Prince, which the rebels—who claim to have more than 700 men in arms, most of them former soldiers in Haiti's army that Aristide dissolved in 1995 after a coup—have also threatened. *AFP*

Suicide bombers kill 10 Iraqi cops in Kirkuk

KIRKUK, Iraq—Two suicide bombers blew up an explosives-laden car at a police station in a Kurdish neighborhood of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk Monday, killing 10 policemen and wounding 35, police and medical sources said.

Dr. Hashem Mohamed of Azadi hospital said the two bombers were also incinerated by the blast, while most of the 35 wounded were seriously hurt.

Almost nothing was left of three of the policemen, he said.

The explosion left arms and legs strewn across the pavement and destroyed some 15 cars, while black smoke billowed into the air and firemen fought to put out the flames.

The attack in the Rahimawa neighborhood occurred at 8:30 a.m. as 400 policemen changed shifts, said the police station chief, Col. Adel Zain al-Abadin Ibrahim.

Two people drove up in a white Oldsmobile and the vehicle exploded, said Sgt. Mohammed Mortada.

Ibrahim added that two men had been arrested near the station for questioning and police were searching for two more cars, a Mercedes and an Opel, in connection with the blast.

The oil center of Kirkuk, an ethnic tinderbox of Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen, suffers daily attacks against police and paramilitary forces working alongside the US-led coalition occupying Iraq.

A twin suicide bombing in the Kurdish city of Arbil on February 1 killed more than 100 and aggravated tensions between Iraq's Kurdish minority clamoring for self rule and the rest of the country. *AFP*

Britons like conspicuous compassion

By Kate Holton

LONDON—Britons who display ostentatious signs of compassion such as wearing colored ribbons may do more harm than good, an independent think-tank said on Monday.

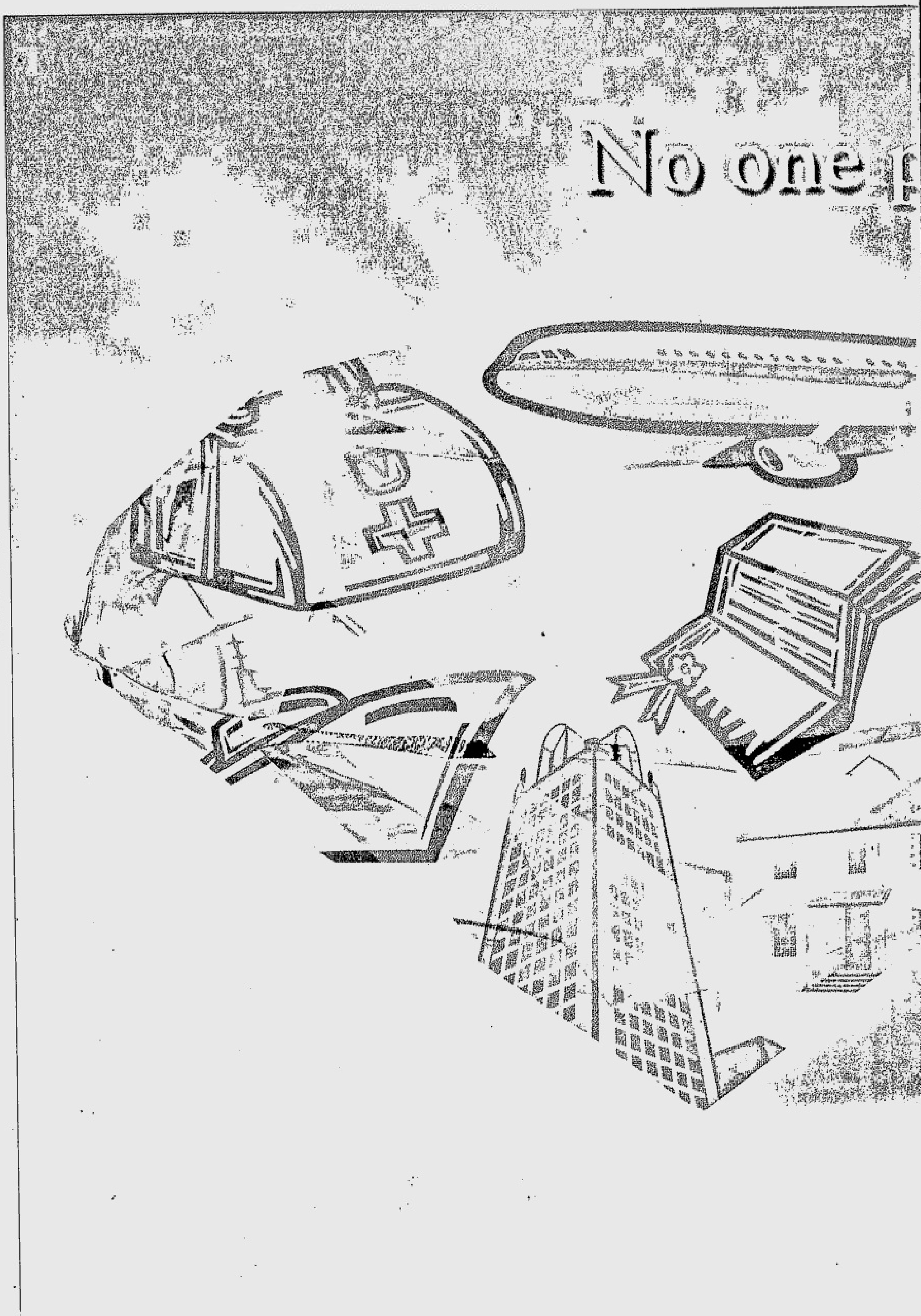
In a new report, Civitas: the Institute for the Study of Civil Society, said the trend showed not how considerate Britons had become but how lonely and selfish.

"We sport countless empathy ribbons, send flowers to recently deceased celebrities, weep in public over the deaths of murdered children... but it is about feeling good, not doing good, and illustrates not how altruistic we have become, but how selfish."

Signing books of remembrance and placing flowers on the graves of deceased celebrities such as Princess Diana was all part of the new culture which values the three Cs—compassion, caring and crying in public—above all else.

The report's author Patrick West said the phenomenon had spread across the Western world and suggested the disintegration of the community had led to a nation of isolated individuals looking to bond over a national tragedy or movement.

"Binding institutions such as the church, marriage, the family and the nation have withered in the post-war era. We have turned into communities of strangers," West, a prolific writer for British newspapers, said. *Reuters*



Iran admits buying from nuke black market

TEHRAN—Iran acknowledged on Sunday that it bought nuclear components on a shady black market amid mounting concern that the Islamic Republic may still be concealing sensitive nuclear research.

Disclosures by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear program, have in recent weeks lifted the lid on the global trade in nuclear technology that could be used to make atomic bombs.

Khan has admitted to leaking nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea. Unlike the other two countries, Iran insists its nuclear program is entirely peaceful.

"We have bought some things from some dealers but we don't know what the source was or what country they came from," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said.

"It happens that some of those (dealers) were from some sub-continent countries," Asefi told reporters, stressing Tehran had informed the UN nuclear watchdog—the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—about the purchases.

Malaysian police said on Friday that Khan had sold Iran $3 million in centrifuge parts to Iran in the mid-1990s.

Western diplomats in Vienna say Iran has given the IAEA the names of five middlemen and about half a dozen Pakistani scientists who helped Tehran acquire nuclear technology.

Diplomats also say the IAEA has found parts usable in advanced "P2" centrifuges to produce enriched uranium in Iran.

Iran admitted late last year to an 18-year cover-up of sensitive nuclear research and signed up to snap inspections of its nuclear facilities.

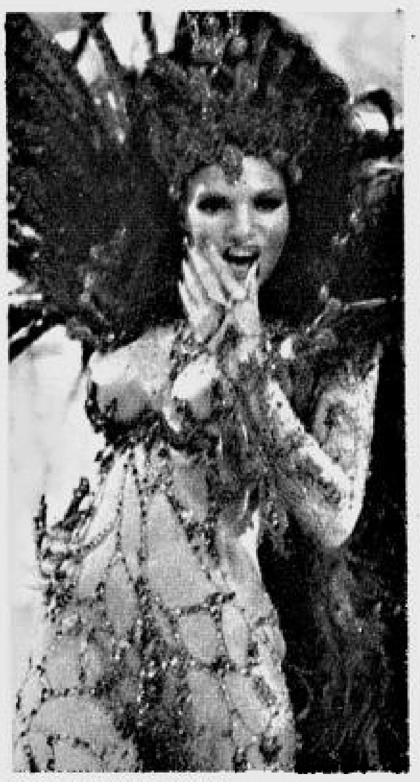
The head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Hassan Rohani, flew to Vienna for a closed-door meeting with IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei on Saturday ahead of the release later this week of an interim report on inspections in Iran, the IAEA said.

Western diplomats in Vienna said the report would describe Iran's failure to declare sensitive nuclear technology to the agency—including P2 centrifuges—in an October declaration of its nuclear program that Tehran said was true and complete.

The discovery of P2 parts and a few assembled centrifuges, which US officials say were found at a military site, has increased concern in Washington and Europe that Iran is still hiding things from the UN body.

IAEA spokesperson Melissa Fleming said Rohani and ElBaradei discussed the agency's progress in verifying Tehran's statements that its entire nuclear programme has been declared and is an entirely peaceful program.

"They also discussed the verification of Iran's suspension of enrichment," Fleming said. *Reuters*



MOST POPULAR PARTY
Model Fabia Borges leads the percussion section of the Unidos da Tijuca samba school up the avenue at the Sambodrome in Rio de Janeiro, during the first night of competition for the 'elite' group, Feb. 22. Rio's globally televised glitzy parades by top samba schools with lavish floats and bare-breasted, feather-adorned dancers will run through early Tuesday. REUTERS

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WORLDBRIEFS

Uganda rebels kill 192

KAMPALA—Ugandan rebels shot and burnt to death 192 people in a camp for displaced civilians in their bloodiest attack in years, a local official said on Sunday. The killings by guerrillas of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a group based in lawless areas of neighboring southern Sudan, cast fresh doubt on repeated recent assertions by the Ugandan government that its army is about to defeat the LRA. *Reuters*

Iran hardliners win

TEHRAN—Iranian religious conservatives were Sunday all-but confirmed as winners of controversial parliamentary polls, but drew a record low turnout as they put an end to the Islamic republic's turbulent experiment with reforms. The interior ministry said 50.57 percent of Iran's 46.3 million eligible voters cast ballots in Friday's polls, the weakest showing in a major election in the 25 years of the Islamic republic. In the capital, turnout was just 28 percent. The figures were well below the two-thirds of the overall electorate and 46 percent of Tehranis who took part in the 2000 legislative contests. *AFP*

SARS victim sues

TORONTO—A woman who was exposed to SARS while in a Toronto hospital is seeking compensation from all three levels of government in a legal claim her lawyers hope to turn into a class-action lawsuit. Andrea Williams contracted Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome at a Toronto hospital in May during the second outbreak of the deadly disease. In her statement of claim, Williams says that health officials prematurely declared an end to the deadly disease and gave the all-clear in early May. Hundreds of people were exposed to the disease during what Williams' lawyers have dubbed SARS 2—the period between April 20 and July 31, 2003. Her lawyers are now asking the court to certify this case as a class-action lawsuit so that others who were exposed to SARS at that time could take part. *AP*

Bigger MI5

LONDON—Britain will boost the size of its domestic intelligence service by 50 percent, hiring 1,000 new staff to counter the threat of terrorism, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott said Sunday. With the Cold War over, the move is a response to the US-led campaign against global terrorism and the threat of weapons of mass destruction. "We've now agreed a thousand more people," to increase intelligence gathering by the home security service, known as MI5, Prescott told BBC television. Asked if the recruitment drive was part of the "war on terror," Prescott said: "That is the main concern now, frankly. I think a lot of our spies might speak Russian but there's not so much for Arabic." *AFP*

Nader for president

WASHINGTON—Consumer advocate and 2000 Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader announced Sunday that he is running again for the White House, brushing aside concerns among Democrats that his candidacy would spoil their party's presidential chances. "I've decided to run as an independent candidate for president," not representing the Greens, he said on NBC television's "Meet the Press" program. Nader is blamed by many Democrats for former vice president Al Gore's achingly narrow defeat by George W. Bush in the 2000 presidential vote. In 2000, Nader convinced many Democratic voters that there was little difference between then Texas governor Bush, and Gore, who served as vice president under Bill Clinton, and he restated that viewpoint Sunday. *AFP*

Afghan attack on chopper

SYDNEY—An Australian helicopter pilot was killed in an attack on employees of a United States construction company in Afghanistan, foreign affairs officials said Monday. A foreign affairs spokesperson said the 45-year-old from Adelaide was killed Sunday when a helicopter he was operating for a US company came under fire in southern Afghanistan. "Sadly, authorities in Afghanistan have confirmed he is Australian," the spokesperson said. *AFP*

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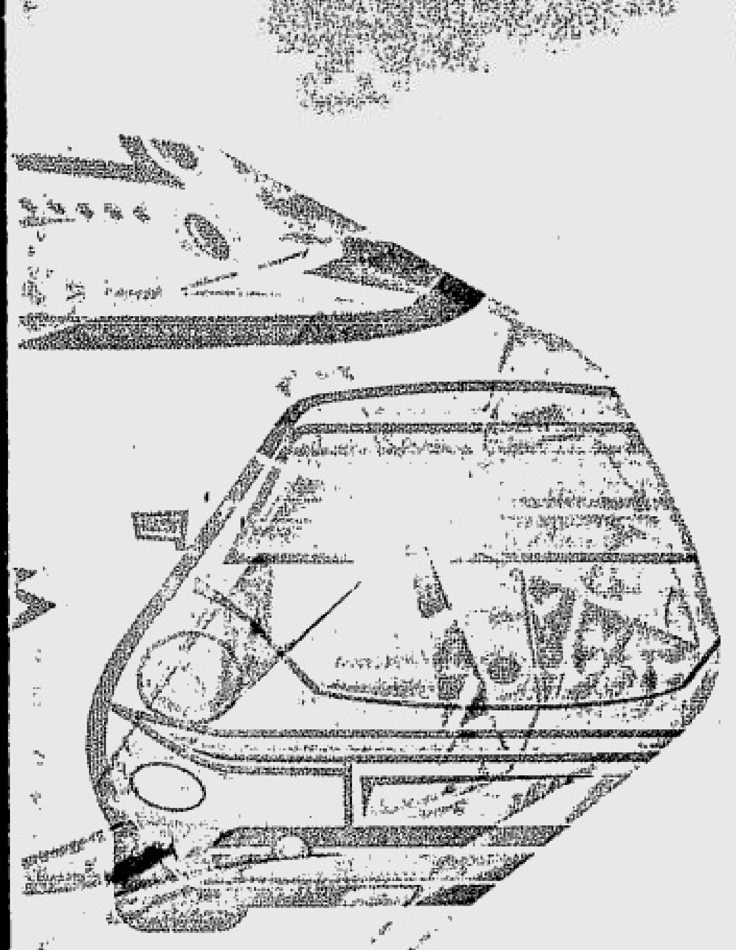

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Evil 'legacies'

EDITORIAL

FIVE years ago a conference on the legacies of the Marcos dictatorship, whose fall the nation will mark tomorrow, was held under the auspices of seven organizations at the Ateneo de Manila University. A participant questioned the use of the word "legacies" in referring to the things inherited from the Marcos dictatorship. He said that a "legacy" is a good thing handed down from one generation to another, but most of the things left by the dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos were certainly anything but good.

For most people, the worst legacy of Marcos was the plunder of the economy. Marcos plundered the economy to amass ill-gotten wealth in the billions of dollars. He acquired international notoriety, being listed in the Guinness Book of World Records under the title "biggest robbery." Guinness said that "the total wealth taken by the [First] Couple was believed to be $5-$10 billion."

Economists said that because the economy was plundered by Marcos, his relatives and cronies, the Filipinos became poorer and the nation became the basket case of the region. The debt-driven growth during the Marcos dictatorship was not sustainable and primarily benefited Marcos, his relatives and cronies.

Up to now the country is still struggling to get out of the debt trap into which it was plunged by Marcos. The billions that are being used to pay the foreign debts that were accumulated during the Marcos regime could have been put to better use to provide social services and public infrastructure to the people.

Caesar Octavius Parlade, who used to be research director of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, said that Marcos got a 15 percent cut on dollar-denominated projects and 20 percent on the yen-denominated ones. While Marcos, his relatives and cronies amassed ill-gotten wealth through many "creative" means, the foreign debt ballooned, reaching a total of $27 billion shortly before the Conjugal Dictatorship was deposed.

That Marcos, his relatives and cronies robbed the country blind is a well-known fact. But what many people, especially the young, do not realize is that Marcos left a legacy far worse than plunder. He destroyed, corrupted or degraded most of the country's political institutions. He closed down Congress and later reopened it as the Batasang Pambansa but made it his personal rubber stamp. He degraded the Judiciary and made it do his bidding. A chief justice was reduced to holding the umbrella for the First Lady.

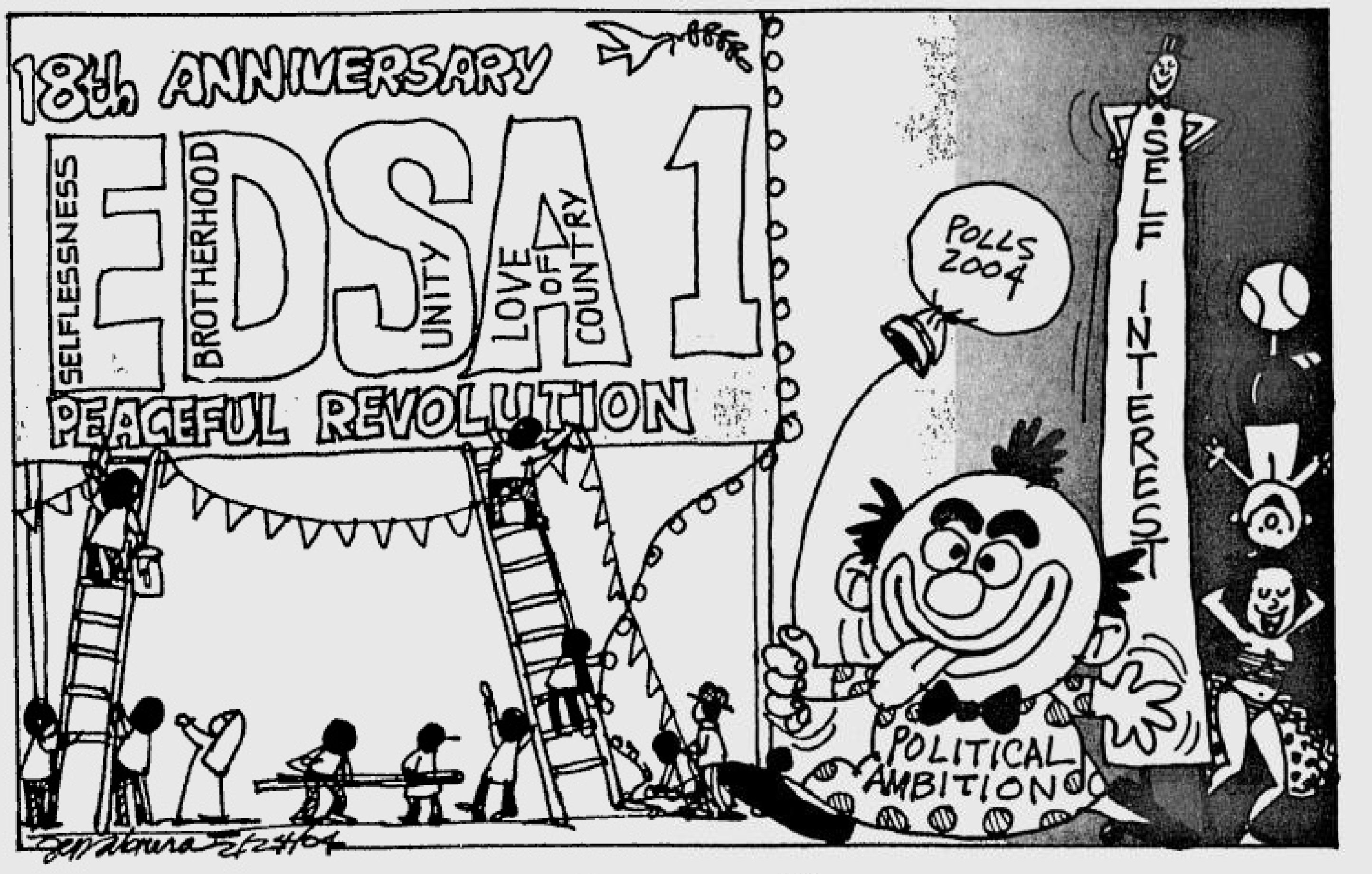
He coddled and corrupted the Armed Forces and the police. If the nation is suffering from occasional military adventurism and coup jitters now, it is because the concept of civilian superiority over the military was destroyed during Marcos' time. Marcos used the military and the police to commit human rights abuses against thousands of political dissidents, protesters and youth leaders.

Marcos prevented young, promising people from rising and becoming leaders of the nation by arresting and detaining them or, worse, ordering their execution. More than economic plunder, the intellectual, spiritual and psychological corruption of the nation and its institutions is the worse crime and is the most evil "legacy" of Marcos to the Filipino people. Mainly because of his "legacies," the nation finds itself bogged down in a mire of poverty, misery and despondency.

The ill-gotten wealth cases are just some of the cases that the nation has not finally resolved in the nearly two decades that have passed since the fall of Marcos. Other cases are those involving thousands of victims of human rights violations. Many of the military and police officers who killed or tortured political dissidents during the Marcos dictatorship are now occupying high positions in government.

It is said that the past is past; that what happened during the Marcos dictatorship should be forgotten so that the nation can start afresh. The cry is for reconciliation, for unity. But how can there be reconciliation when there is no admission and no justice? Before there can be forgiveness there must be confession and contrition.

The nation has to be constantly reminded of the "legacies" of the Marcos dictatorship until all the cases shall have been given a proper closure. The nation's memory needs to be constantly jogged and the truth has to be told and retold until the nation shall have obtained justice for the wrongs that Marcos and his people have done to it.



'Talking walls'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"WANTED Dead Or Alive : GMA's Peso. Reward P500,000," screamed the blue sign, sprayed along a busy avenue's fence.

"Kill Tau Gamma Phi. We Promise 2 Kill U All! Skreptons," student fraternities threaten, in red paint, down the same road. Welcome to the "talking walls"—a jumbled universe of dubbings on restrooms, flyovers and waiting sheds.

Elections also are season for letting a thousand posters bloom. Minutes after the ban on campaigning lapsed, Dick Gordon's smile exploded on walls. Thousands of "Pangulong Gloria" technicolor handbills followed. So did "GMA" all-weather signboards, nailed to telephone and power posts that snake along main highways—reaching into hinterlands.

And if GMA is there, can FPJ-Loren and Roco-Aquino be far behind? Then, Ping Lacson and Brother Eddie (Halleluia!), followed by "senatoriables" like Ernesto Herrera, Perfecto Yasay.

Paste-em-up squads, late at night, hurriedly plaster walls within reach. Before sunrise, they disappear.

"I scent the morning air," the ghost of Hamlet father's frets on the ramparts of Elsinore castle. "The glow worm shows the matins to be near."

Clean-up crews appear at first crack of dawn.

Even this early, posters are reaching floodtide proportions. They swamp earlier half-faded signs like: "Mabuhay Ang NPA" or fraternity logos.

Many consider graffiti defacement. To tamp it down is expensive.

Restaurant owners grumble as they scrub away over coarse jokes on restroom walls. Security guards, in subdivisions, keep an eye cocked for Akyat Bahay gangs—and spray raiders.

Graffiti strapped New York subway authorities with a multi-million cleanup problem—until aerosol-proof cars came on track.

In Rome, the Food and Agriculture Organization gave up on beefed-up guarding and paint buckets. Instead, the United Nations agency snatched victory from the jaws of aerosol vandals by planting fast growing ivy, along the walls of its Aventino Avenue offices.

Dictatorships saw "talking walls" emerge as a channel for dissent. During China's chaotic "Cultural Revolution," graffiti was a minuscule channel for dissent. "Wall newspapers" followed, as reason slowly returned.

In his turn, Marcos gagged the press. "New Society" media lost so much credibility, people then believed only two items in the papers: their publication dates and the obituaries.

That suppression fueled an outburst of "talking walls," along with the mosquito press. "Ibagsak Ang Marcos Tuta" was a favorite. So, was "Serve The People," until the 1986 People Power Revolution stranded the Reds in safe houses.

As crime-buster, Alfredo Lim sprayed homes of drug-pushers. He didn't get very far. A throw-back to the medieval practice of burning the letter "A" on the foreheads of adulterers, Lim critics protested. Others recalled that the Master refused to cast the first stone at an adulteress.

Just what those wall scrawls mean remains a matter of scholarly dispute.

Universities like Tulane, Northwestern and Santa Clara study a wide range of graffiti: Afro, Asian, Chicano, lesbian, religious or racist themes. Northern Sydney researchers trace psychological profiles from wall scrawls on Freemantle prisons. Michigan University analyzed erotic graffiti from medieval Pompeii. And the London School of Economics' Rosalind Gill studied the burger-chain McDonald's "entry into the graffiti writers' world."

Graffiti's one-burst lines reinforce name recall. But debate on basic issues remains with newspapers and, now, the Internet.

FPJ reveals what his administration could be, not by what he says, which is just verbal graffiti really. He shows more by what he does not say, which is nothing. Zero. Nilch. Nada. Thus, the need for a full-scale debate on festering issues FPJ has dodged so far.

His cronies, for one. If elected on his coattails, people fear they'd be like, as Thais say, "letting loose a bunch of starving chimps in a cage full of bananas."

Vietnam now grows at 7 percent a year. It could be the next country to leave us choking on its dust. Can FPJ cope just by jerry-rigging a 19-man economic team?

"The battle for the president's mind was like the trench warfare of World War I," Peggy Noonan recalls of movie-actor President Ronald Reagan. "Never have so many fought so hard for so barren a territory."

"Da King" ducks a debate by stressing his "sincerity." Is that enough for the presidency?

"Public office does not endow a man to whom (public office) is entrusted with any special gift of impeccability or infallibility," Fr. Horacio de la Costa said in the 1948 homily at President Manuel Roxas' funeral. "He may not claim thereby the divinity that doth hedge a king." Competence must be matched with dedication. "Austere are the laurels of the Republic."

As the polls near, citizens can only brace themselves for still-to-come waves of spray cans and paint gangs.

* * *

E-mail juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Irony upon irony

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE FRIENDS of the Court are right: FPJ's legitimacy is not an issue. But that is so in more ways than they imagine.

At the very least, the law is not an abstraction. It is not just words written on pieces of paper between the covers of books that are yellowing with age or gathering dust in obscure corners of libraries. It is something that lives in the hearts of a people. The law is nothing apart from its spirit, it is but a shadow of itself in its letter. The law isn't just lawyers quoting from statute books, it is a people drawing from tradition, common sense and their sense of right and wrong. A technical interpretation of the law is about as much law as an enumeration of the items of an agenda is poetry.

Neither is the law something that may be used to thwart justice. I caught several "experts" on TV saying the law must be obeyed, and there is no higher arbiter of the law in this country than the Supreme Court. Oh, but there is, and that is the people. If it were not so, we would even now still be living under martial law. No one was more a stickler for law than Ferdinand Marcos, and no one wreaked more injustice than he. He had a law for every iniquity he fomented. The law does not exist to impede justice, it exists to promote it. A law that impedes justice is about as much law as a coach who impedes the performance of his team is a coach.

The Supreme Court showed supreme wisdom when in the face of tradition, common sense and the sovereign will of the people, it appointed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as Erap's replacement after Edsa II. It will show supreme folly if in the face of history, common sense and this country's sense of right and wrong, it rules against FPJ on the ground that he is not a Filipino in every sense of the word. In fact, it is not FPJ who is on trial here, the Supreme Court is. The entire legal system of this country is.

I don't know if the people who are trying to mount this iniquity realize the depths of irony they are plumbing. It is not merely, as I wrote before, that FPJ represents, for good or ill, this country's concept of the ideal Filipino, though that is no mean feat by itself. FPJ's screen roles have pretty much defined the ideal Filipino values, or the ideal Filipino male values—humility, filial piety, loyalty to friends, bravery, physical strength or prowess, etc.—for several generations. Of course, one can make a case for these values being feudal or traditional or submissive and for FPJ's movies promoting a false sense of class harmony (rich girl falls for poor boy), such as the activists of yore did, but you cannot deny FPJ's impact on this country's concept or sense of self. To suggest he is "not really a Filipino" is irony of epic proportions. It is to blot out in one fell swoop the popular cultural history of this country over the last half century.

But far more than this, from the other end, the government's sudden concern for the Filipino-ness of a candidate flies in the face of its utter contempt for the Filipino-ness of this country. The attempt to disqualify FPJ on the grounds of citizenship comes at a time when this country has absolutely no concern for citizenship.

It comes at a time when GMA has almost single-handedly plunged the country back to the status of an American colony. She it is who has defied world opinion and sided with the Americans in invading Iraq, she it is who has hung on to every word not of the Philippine Constitution but of George W. Bush, she it is who has resurrected what Claro M. Recto used to call a policy of mendicancy, harping on the Filipino's inferiority and helplessness (we can't even rid ourselves of a small Moro kidnap gang by ourselves) and extolling the virtues of abjectness and prostration.

The provision on presidential candidates being natural-born Filipinos was clearly put there by our founding fathers to ensure the candidates' unswerving loyalty to this flag and not to another. You go by the spirit and not the letter of that law, the one whose citizenship should be questioned is not FPJ but GMA. It is she whose loyalty to this country is patently questionable. It is she who is not an American citizen but not for lack of trying.

Which brings us to the fact that the attempt to disqualify FPJ also comes at a time when Franklin Drilon and his confreres in the Senate have just passed the dual citizenship law, as ferocious an attack on Filipino citizenship as anyone can imagine. Can there be a more ridiculous concept than someone swearing absolute, total and exclusive loyalty to two flags? That is like swearing absolute, total and exclusive loyalty to two wives. As it is, swearing absolute, total and exclusive loyalty to two wives is banned as bigamy. Yet swearing absolute, total and exclusive loyalty to two flags is embraced as virtue. What if the two flags get divided on a war? Will you serve in the army of the one as a conscript while the other opposes it?

It should prove particularly disastrous for this country, most of whose school kids do not want to be a Filipino at all. That comes from a survey Malou Doronila did of public school pupils in the early 1990s. The respondents cited as their preferred citizenship American, Japanese and Saudi Arabian. Filipino came only fourth. You have dual citizenship, Filipinos will be Americans first and Filipinos second. That is the intention of the law to begin with, the Filipino citizenship tacked in for convenience and not for obligation. You get to have the benefits of being a Filipino while having none of its blights.

On top of everything else, you have a country where 19 percent of the population wants to leave it.

And you think Fernando Poe Jr. is not a Filipino citizen?

No ring of sincerity

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

BROTHER Eddie Villanueva, bishop of the Jesus is Lord Movement, put on quite a show of force at the Luneta last Sunday evening to kick off his presidential campaign. I know Bro. Eddie to be a very affable and likeable fellow, but I must confess that his "Bangon" crusade against corruption in government and society doesn't have a ring of sincerity as far as civil society groups are concerned, after Cibac, the party-list group led by his son Rep. Joel Villanueva, failed to vote for the impeachment of Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco in the face of massive evidence of corruption. Villanueva's group also wobbled in the anti-impeachment move against Chief Justice Hilario Davide. When push came to shove in the House on the corruption issue, Cibac was nowhere to be found.

* * *

More than a week after Valentine's Day, 200 people including Cabinet officials, members of the Senate and the House and leading personalities from the academe and the medical profession, took time out from politics to toast undying love. They joined former Senate President Jovito Salonga and his wife, the former Lydia Busuego, as they celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary at the Valle Verde Country Club last Sunday. Their actual anniversary date was Feb. 14, but Ms Salonga was in a hospital ICU for a week due to some complications of diabetes. She gamely recovered and arrived for that luncheon in a wheelchair lent by a friend, and she and Ka Jovy sat on a dais apart from the guests, just like two newlyweds.

* * *

Salonga, in his remarks, said that someone asked if they would reenact the exchange of vows they made in 1948 in St. John's Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the presence of a pastor and two witnesses, "as a soft, gentle snow was falling." They met in January 1947 on board a ship bound for the US, where he was to enroll at the Harvard University Law School for his master's and love bloomed in the eastern seaboard. "But we do not want to commit the wonderful mistake we committed many years ago," quipped Salonga, "We shall merely have a simple thanksgiving prayer for all the good things that have come our way because of that blessed mistake."

He narrated how worried he and the family had been over Lydia's illness, earlier mistakenly diagnosed as a heart attack. Luckily it was merely an irregular heartbeat na *"marahil dahil sa laki ng kanyang pagmamahal sa akin at sa aming mga anak,"* quipped Ka Jovy of his wife whose favorite *kundiman* are "Gaano Kita Kamahal" and "Minamahal Kita."

* * *

Theirs has been an enduring love story of deep caring for each other through personal and political vicissitudes, but then, this is what married life is all about. Lydia, who nursed Ka Jovy through his near-mortal wounds incurred during the bombing of the LP rally at Plaza Miranda in 1971, shared a prison cell with him in 1980 in Fort Bonifacio, where she was allowed to take care of him after his arrest by Marcos. Then came 12 years of exile in the US and then the biggest disappointment of not capturing the presidency in 1992 despite his acknowledged brilliance. We wish the Salongas more years of bliss together.

* * *

The presidents of the two oldest parties, the Liberal Party and the Nacionalista Party, Rep. Florencio Abad and Sen. Manuel Villar, respectively, attended the Salonga reception. Abad has been joining President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign since the LP is one of the pillars of the K-4 coalition. He told me about GMA's new campaign strategy of steering away from huge and expensive rallies a la show biz and instead conducting dialogues with small groups of local leaders during provincial sorties. *Talagang sinusuyod ni GMA ang bayan-bayan,* said Abad, adding how *"super-masipag"* she is.

* * *

While the LP leaders voted to join the K-4 coalition, the NP has not indicated its plans. I queried Villar if the NP would join the K-4, and he replied that he is still in the process of consulting his partymates, as he did not wish to be accused of dictatorial tendencies. But Villar said many local NP officials are already in the K-4 camp, so he foresees that eventually the party would end up there. He said he will personally join GMA's campaign. He recalled that the late NP president Salvador Laurel had appointed him chair of an interim committee just before the former vice president left for cancer treatment in the United States and on that basis he began activating the party. Two days before his death, Laurel called from San Francisco and told Villar, "Manny, I don't think I can come home any more. *Ikaw na lang ang bahala sa partido.*" He promised to take good care of it.

* * *

There's an apocryphal saying, ascribed to a former senator, that he didn't care what anyone said about him so long as his name was spelled right. With this in mind, I'd like to offer my apologies to Deputy Chief of Mission Akio Egawa of the Japanese Embassy for misspelling his name as "Igawa" last week. The blame rests on my Bicolana assistant, Gina Duran, who pronounced it as "Igawa" as well as on me. But this also gives me an excuse to plug the much-awaited RP-Japan Festival 2004, which opens tonight with an invitational showing of the Okinawan Performing Arts, featuring the Shida Fusako Dance Company and Ara Yukito, at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino, CCP, Roxas Blvd., Manila, at 7:30 p.m. The same show will be open to the public tomorrow, same time and place, free of charge. Catch the colorful sights and sounds of this dance group from the place called "Islands of Songs" and "Islands of Performing Arts." For more info, call the Japan Foundation Manila office at 811-6155 to 58.

Different loves

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHILE we're still observing "Love Month," it's still apropos, I think, to reprint a statement made by Likhaan, a grassroots organization devoted to upholding the reproductive health of women, in behalf of those enjoying a "different," if not "scandalous" way of loving, at least according to those who bill themselves social and moral arbiters.

The statement was issued in relation to the Second "Wild Meeting of Excluded Families," one of the more unexpected spin-offs from the "World Meeting of Families," sponsored by the Holy See and last held here, in which families or familial arrangements that strayed from the conventional and supposed "normal" were roundly rejected. The "World Meeting of Families" is long over, but Filipino "wild families" are still holding their annual meet and gaining strength and visibility thereby.

I was out of town and so could not participate in the "Wild Meeting" but here's the participants' statement, for our information and entertainment:

"It is February, the month of courting, loving, coupling BUT only within the parameters of 'decent society': heterosexual relationships; sex within marriage; sex without resorting to artificial contraception... Any belief, practice, relationship to the contrary is immoral, decadent, a sin, a criminal act.

"We are the unholy transgressors: we who have borne or are children out of wedlock, are 'living in' without the blessings of marriage, have separated from our husbands/wives, have sexual relationships with the same sex or both sexes, have regulated or are regulating our pregnancies with artificial contraceptives, have undergone abortion, etc. Our souls are supposedly already burning in hell while our earthly lives are made miserable by the day. We are mocked to our faces and behind our backs. We are the last to be hired and at work, get lower pay and less benefits. We are barred from certain places and positions, and we are often the objects of people's hostility and violence. Simply because our sexual and reproductive beliefs and practices are different.

* * *

"YET we live, love and work like the rest of society. We are parents, siblings and children within families. We work as housewives, workers, vendors, teachers, lawyers, health professionals, employees, etc. We are citizens, too, of this beloved country being run aground by visionless, spineless and corrupted leaders.

"We are distressed by the worsening poverty and the marginalization of the poor. And are alarmed by our government's habit of echoing the discriminatory policies and practices of the superpowers that it fears. George Bush declared war on what he called 'terrorists,' and GMA loses no time to bomb Muslim Mindanao. The Catholic declared war on D-E-A-T-H—Divorce, Euthanasia, Abortion, Total contraception (*sic*), and Homosexuality, and GMA falls over herself to ban artificial contraceptives and moralize against abortion.

"We believe that a society that allows discrimination of whatever kind, including that based on religious and moral differences, builds on hatred and contains the seeds of war.

"We will not allow this close-mindedness to develop any further.

"This day, we claim our right to our sexual and reproductive choices, including the right to enjoy Valentine's Day as we see fit. This day we say enough of 'othering' and moral chauvinism. This day we commit ourselves to challenging government and other 'moralist' institutions, to make the Philippines a free and non-judgmental society!"

* * *

THE REVIEW of the movie "Milan," billed as a light romance but in reality an exposé of sorts on the lives of Filipino overseas workers in Italy, drew reactions from readers who are themselves working abroad.

Chito Lacsina, writing from Vancouver, says that as a volunteer at the local Catholic Church, he has encountered many *kababayans*, welcoming them to their new home and at least "providing them with a familiar *kababayan* face every Sunday." Many of those he meets have come from Singapore, Hong Kong, the Middle East, Italy and other locales, he notes. "Once they get their permanent residence status, you will find a lot of them working for McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's and most of the fast food outlets. A lot of them eventually get the job they are qualified for and wanted to have."

Lacsina notes, though that even after getting mainstreamed into the Canadian economy and society, Filipino migrants still encounter certain problems.

"Some of the problems that might occur is the disintegration of the family once they arrive here. I am no expert but probably one of the main reasons is the inability to adjust to a new life and culture and language. Yes, we think of ourselves as the third largest English-speaking nation, but our fluency in English has deteriorated rapidly."

Another "hidden problem," says Lacsina, is that "although most of the Catholic churches have big Filipino numbers in their congregation, a large number of Filipino girls are seeking abortion (it is legal here in Canada). It is quite a paradox considering that Filipinos are supposed to be staunch Catholics."

* * *

ANOTHER reader, who wished to remain anonymous, says the movie "serves as an eye-opener on the situation of fellow Filipinos in Italy." The reader says there is even a new term created to describe foreign domestic help: "global women," who look after the homes of working couples around the world and thereby allow their economies to make full use of the couples' skills and energies.

The reader says that when the phenomenon of migrant labor was discussed in his class, he didn't know whether he should defend the women or "apologize for our government's policy to promote working abroad."

The search for Palao

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

SATISFIED and happy at having found such abundance to satisfy their daily needs, the Palaos offered to return to their land to convince their companions to trade with these islands. The project was proposed by the Jesuits to the governor since they thought it an excellent opportunity to propagate the Gospel. Despite the confusing details they gave as to the direction of their country, its discovery was pursued. They made a sort of map where they placed 87 little pebbles of varying sizes indicating that a light boat leaving Guiwan should sail towards the southwest and in three days they would find the major island called Panlag.

With that aim and with donations from various Manila residents a ship was outfitted in September 1697, with D. Jaime Xavier on board. He was a Jesuit brother from Holland who knew something about navigation. He was to pass for Fr. Francisco Peado in Guiwan who had prepared another embarkation for this discovery.

By November, the ship reached Balanguiguan and the brother disembarked. That night there came a storm and the ship was lost with all the people who had remained on board. The brother recognized that the ship prepared by the priest in Guiwan was not seaworthy and for that reason he returned to Manila. The enterprise was put on hold for the next decade.

Fr. Pablo Clarin, S.J. wrote to his superior general Tirso Gonzalez and to Fr. Andres Serrano translating the project proposal in Italian for the benefit of Pope Clement XI who, moved by the deepest zeal to propagate the faith, dispatched a brief to King Luis XIV of France, informing the latter that various islands had been discovered that had not yet been evangelized according to information received from the archbishop of Manila and some religious from the Company.

The Holy Father wanted to recommend this new mission to the Catholic king to secure his support and ensure its success. Earlier the king had contributed a considerable amount for the missionaries in California. Ultimately His Holiness appointed Fr. Andres Serrano to have the honor of presenting himself to the king and receive his orders.

With this recommendation from His Holiness, the French king wrote to Philip V to get his support for the project. The Spanish king wrote to the Viceroy of Mexico as well as to the archbishop stating that he had responded to Fr. Andres Serrano's project favorably and ordering that they support the Jesuit missionaries who would undertake the mission and provide them with everything necessary for the trip as well as their upkeep in those islands. He also ordered that soldiers be assigned to them as escorts to ensure their safety. The Viceroy of New Spain was also authorized to get P2,000 from the royal treasury every year and send it to the procurator of the Jesuits in Manila.

He also charged the archbishops to assist in promoting a project so attuned to God's service and supported by the Pope himself. The king wanted to be apprised on the progress of the work and directed that the ship that left Cavite with the *situado* every year should explore the Islas Marianas.

The governor was threatened with punishment if he were to neglect the enterprise. The royal edict was sent on Oct. 19, 1705 from Madrid.

In view of this royal order, Governor Zabalburu had a powerful ship constructed in 1708. The following March, it left with Frs. Antonio Arias and Jose de Bobadilla, a brother and 25 soldiers on board. They had picked up Fr. Franscisco Cavia in Cancabatoc who served as chaplain of the ship.

They left the strait of Panaon and passed through various routes without finding the land they were seeking. Exhausted, the troops pretended that they lacked water and provisions, causing the search to be aborted. They reached the Cabo S. Agustin the southernmost point in Mindanao, passing by the coast of the island through the south, then Zamboanga and Iloilo and proceeded to Cavite where they landed.

Frustrated by these events, the governor prepared for another expedition the following year, with a better ship and a more experienced pilot. This was facilitated by the arrival in Palapag of some Palaos who were in similar circumstances as those that had arrived in Guiwan earlier. The chief was called Moac and his wife was Marua, natives of an island called Fais. With them were their two sons and two slaves. Another child was born shortly after their arrival.

The governor, upon hearing the news, ordered that they be brought to Manila, so that he could persuade them to accompany the new expedition. On the trip to Manila, one of the Palaos, a boy of 14, died but the rest arrived safely and were welcomed by the governor.

Thus another expedition was formed with Gen. Miguel Eloriaga and Juan de Acosta as pilot, Fr. Bobadilla as superior, Fr. Pedro de Estrada and the brother Francisco Aguaron and Fr. Felipe Mesia as chaplain. They left Manila with the Palaos. But in the shoals of Marinduque, they encountered a powerful typhoon. Aguaron who had gone in a small vessel to look for fresh supplies in Boac was left behind. Strong winds carried his boat to the port of Romblon where his companions had taken shelter. From there they went on with their search for Palao.

Monsters

He who fights monsters should see to it that he himself does not become a monster. When you gaze long into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.—Friedrich Nietzsche

YOUNG BLOOD

Dennis B. Gonzaga

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE COUNTRY is going to hell, shouted a doomsayer in Avenida. He was raining fire and brimstone and spit on both the indifferent and the amused. He spoke of the monsters of society and urged people to open their eyes and do something about it. He did not say what. He just said something had to be done.

I wondered why the people just ignored him. Was it the madness with which he rebuked them? Was it the stink and the grime that covered him? Was it the irritating clatter of his empty can? Or was it because he echoed with perfect clarity the mumbled cry of the Pinoy?

Living through each day in this country takes a heavy toll on one's sanity. Reading the dailies is quite an ordeal. Everyday, the soap of the times rehashes the same pathetic narrative. Rapists, frauds, thieves, kidnappers, crooks—from the common and crude to the rich and refined—always land on the front page. It is almost pointless to watch television, since all there is to see and hear are the same images of mediocrity and the same twisted rhetoric. The news features so-called public servants shamelessly lying through their teeth and urging people to keep their faith in them. Prime-time TV is almost an insult to the intelligence of the viewing public. Blame it on those who write the plot, those who hold the camera, and those who decide which truths to share and which truths to hide. Blame it on the elements that comprise the art and science of media.

I question my sanity for staying in this country. I question the wisdom of hoping that things will get better. I shudder to think of what the future holds.

Some friends have done the only sane thing to do: be practical and grab any opportunity. Some went to work overseas, even if it meant wiping the soiled bottoms of the elderly or wading in raw petroleum muck. Some joined the mad scramble of professional lemmings, fighting for a neat cubicle somewhere in the high-rise offices of some multinational firms in Metro Manila. Some chose to be disembodied call center voices, catering to investing clients.

Others opted to stay—or overstay—in school, shifting from course to course. "Why graduate?" one friend explains. "What's the point? By not graduating, at least I will not worsen the unemployment rate in the country." Twisted rhetoric or good argument?

Two of my friends hope to enter the Philippine Military Academy. I kidded them that even if they got themselves killed on account of stupidity, they would still be heroes and might have some elementary schools named after them.

One friend is eagerly seeking a scholarship grant abroad just so she can get out of this country. No one wants to work in the bureaucracy.

A significant number of brilliant minds of our generation are leaving. They can only see a bleak future for this country and for themselves if they choose to stay. After all, the responsibility to take care of yourself is equal, if not a bit more important, than your responsibility to society.

A friend told me that while her life in the United States was good, she still missed the Philippines. She wanted to return but loathed the lack of professional opportunity and the uncertainty. She is now trying to bring her entire family to the US.

Who can blame them? Why bother to be patriots and visionaries? That is tantamount to being a grossly underpaid civil servant, an unemployed intellectual or a filthy street bum.

What may one expect if he continues to place his trust in this country? Three brief Edsa spectacles and little progress in between. The political circus stays and the same clowns continue to slap each other's butt while the audience remains exasperated, tired of the farce.

In a few months, we will again vote for our leaders. Unfortunately, voting wisely means choosing the least evil rather than picking the best among the best. We might even have no elections.

Pretenders are vying for high public offices. Turncoats make a mockery of our politics. Credible public servants are chided or conveniently eased out while the corrupt are feted. The country is a collage of divisiveness, poverty and injustice. The wise remain unheeded. The fools are admired. The learned few keep the uneducated millions ignorant so that they can be exploited. The uneducated millions continue to drag the learned few deeper in the mud.

It is getting harder to put food on the table and pay the bills even if one takes two jobs and sidelines in between. It is frustrating to see crooks earn more in a minute than decent hardworking individuals do in a month or two. Even walking down the streets can be tough since you could end up as the subject of news stories in tomorrow's tabloids.

We hesitate to help pedestrians in distress because it could be a swindle or a prank for broadcast on TV. I am beginning to believe that the only proof that some goodwill is left in this country is when a cranky seatmate consents to pass your fare to the jeepney driver.

I hope that I am mistaken. I desperately fend off skepticism and the sense of hopelessness. I want to believe that things are much better than they seem. I believe that our good leaders and citizens, few and marginalized though they may be, will continue to do something—anything. The monsters are closing in. The temptation to give up, to join the monsters, becomes harder and harder to resist.

The country is going to hell, according to the doomsayer on Avenida. He blamed it all on the excesses of men, on the perversions of our leaders and our institutions, on the erosion of our values, and even on the yet unborn children who will manifest the same sins and weaknesses.

He was most convincing. I almost saw in him a kindred spirit. But even he must rattle his can for the deaf to hear so that he can make it through the day.

Dennis B. Gonzaga, 24, is an instructor at the Ateneo de Naga University. He is currently on study leave.

THEY SAID

For real

"The presidency is real—there are no scripts, and no take-twos."

—Rep. Prospero Nograles, criticizing Fernando Poe's declaration that his 40 years as an actor was all he needed to be a good president

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Lies and antics of politicians

IN AN ERA where we can no longer distinguish politics from show biz and vice-versa, it is not surprising that our politicians extensively tap media to spread lies and inanities for political mileage.

Let's not go far in refreshing our minds about the falsehoods and antics they resort to. All candidates have a pre-planned grand entrance act to the political arena. Almost in chorus they tell us that all they want is to serve and uplift our worsening conditions. I say, stop the crap; we know what you're up to.

All we have are big fat liars for presidential candidates. No exceptions, not even the one they call "Da King." King of what? The king of secrecy? He has a lot of secrets slowly being revealed—the secret child, mistresses, and of course his biggest secret of all, his secret platform of government. If this so-called honest man could cheat his wife, how much more the common *tao* and the star-struck masa.

The former police general who use to call himself Mr. Clean, also known for his no-nonsense talk but more famous for innuendos and mudslinging, is also a fake. His most explosive exposé served as his opening bombshell and ticket to his presidential bid. But the real score was actually to draw the public eye away from the legal setback he suffered in the Kuratong Baleleng case after the Supreme Court ruled on the re-opening of the case.

The Pidal controversy is not new to the world of bigtime politics. Almost all of the candidates, vying for national posts resort to this kind of banking arrangement to channel campaign contributions from tycoons. But the practice was legal before the enactment of the Anti-Money Laundering Law.

Roco may be the ideal candidate. But the way things are going, it seems his early popularity is now slowly fading. His weak political machinery has already taken its toll. Even his flower power gimmick have proved to be futile.

Remember the famous Rizal Day announcement? Because of her turn-around from her promise not to run again, the day commemorating the national hero's martyrdom became synonymous with April Fool's Day. But, mind you, the big lie was part of a grand strategy to mellow down the already growing opposition and cool off the heat then being applied to her by her political foes.

These presidential wannabes have many things in common—from lies to inanities, from falsehoods to antics with the same denominator—self-interest.

—RIMMON VILLAMOR LANCANAN
Flat 34 Avenue House,
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Meco cover-up of OFW rape?

THE MOST recent statement of the Department of Foreign Affairs leaving the Filipina rape victim to pursue her case in Taiwan—even if she was hurriedly spirited out by officials of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office back to the Philippines—is unacceptable. DFA should investigate Meco officials for its seeming bias toward the alleged rapist and for trying to cover up the incident which has sparked a big row in Taiwan because it involves a well-known politician. The Philippine government should also prosecute those found to be responsible for this cover-up.

In an article that appeared in the China Post, lawyer Edmund Miguel Tanco, head of Meco's Assistance to Nationals Division, twice re-echoed the claim that the accused and Rose (the alleged victim) only had a misunderstanding and miscommunication. Mr. Tanco added that on Jan. 29 when he accompanied Rose to the airport where she met with the wife and son of the accused, her employer, he noted that the maid was not in visible distress. Mr. Tanco further denied any knowledge of a settlement between the alleged rapist's family and Rose.

This is despite Meco's admission, which appeared in Taipei Times, that it received a phone call on Jan. 23 from Rose complaining that she had been sexually attacked by her employer. Furthermore, Meco claimed that they took the woman to Mackay Memorial Hospital for treatment before filing a complaint with the Chungshan police station.

The statement, made by Taiwan's Council of Labor Affairs (CLA), which appeared in Taiwan News, that Meco notified Taipei's labor bureau of the sexual assault case on Jan. 28, further gives proof that Meco is apparently covering up the case. The CLA also stated that Meco replied that the latter's lawyer had already negotiated a settlement between the two parties. This is usually taken care of by Meco's Assistance to Nationals Division.

On the other hand, the Taiwan International Workers Association (Tiwa), which first publicized the issue, stated that it has very strong evidence against the accused. This includes the findings of the medical examination indicating a rape and the copy of the agreement between Rose and her employer which according to Tiwa, the word "sexual abuse" was indeed written.

There should be no repeat of what happened to countless OFW rape victims, including Grace of Dubai, who were not given any assistance by the Philippine government.

—AURELIO ESTRADA
coordinator for Taiwan, Asia
Pacific Mission for Migrants
(APMM), c/o Kowloon Union
Church, G/F, No.4 Jordan Road,
Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR

How about space and space exploration?

IN THE HIGHLY political climate that has engulfed the country the past few weeks, Filipinos suddenly stood still and listened closely to news of the landing of the US Spirit Rover on Mars. It's another breakthrough, so to speak.

As the United States goes farther with its space exploration, it becomes hard to admit how far we have lagged behind in terms of technological advancement. I wonder when the Filipino people will see their own spacecraft lift off for a space mission? I wonder when will we have our own cosmonauts or astronauts? I wonder when the Philippine government will have its own space center like the Nasa? I wonder when will all these things happen or come to reality? Right now, this is just a Filipino dream. Far from just hallucinating, I really wonder when the Philippine government can start to think of building a spaceship that can at least reach up to the level of the Earth's atmosphere. The only place we have explored so far, is the "political atmosphere." I think this one is hotter than that of the Earth's atmosphere.

I have read a lot of the candidates' plans of government but not one mentions building a ship to conquer the space or at least a hypothetical plan to engage in space exploration. We have not even planned or attempted to build a spacecraft. These days, it only exists in the minds of the eccentrics (thanks to them anyway). But I do not blame the candidates, especially those running for president, for not having anything about a spaceship, outer space and space exploration in their priorities. If they did, they might be mistaken as lunatics and dumped into the waste bin of history. The bottom line is space exploration is light years away from reality and from the minds of saner people.

—ABNER S. CABISUELAS,
Office of the Comelec Secretary,
Comission on Elections,
Intramuros, Manila

Fealty guaranteed

IN "ALL About Character" (PDI, 2/07/04), Ms Rina Jimenez-David, commenting on Poe's "extramarital" indiscretion, pointed out that "It's still a valid question to ask: If a man cannot keep true to his marital vows, what guarantee do we have that he will be faithful to his oath of office?" Where have you been all these years, Ms David? Did you arrive at this conclusion after a thorough study of the cultural and sociological milieu, past or contemporary, of this country? Or is the subject matter the only available fodder in your column for the day? The flip side to your rhetorical query is: If a man, be he a national or provincial "leader", had not breached his marital vows, is that any guarantee that he would be true to the terms of his oath of office?

—JOVE SOLLANO TRINIDAD,
70 Visitacion Street
Cebu City

Sober opposition?

DEPOSED President Estrada has warned that there would be a civil war if his bosom friend Fernando Poe Jr. is disqualified by the Supreme Court on account of his questionable citizenship. Then two of Estrada's henchmen, ex-Senator Francisco Tatad and Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, issued similar warnings.

These are irresponsible statements, coming as they did from a former president and two candidates for senator. These threats have no place under a rule of law. If we do not abide by the decisions of the courts, what will happen to our republic? By their statements, Estrada and company are espousing mob rule.

It is disappointing that the so-called sober minds in the opposition have remained quiet about the threats of Estrada et al. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who has something to say on about anything under the sun, is suddenly tight-lipped. Is he afraid to dissociate himself from Erap for fear of losing the "*masa*" votes? And what is the position of Sen. Edgardo Angara on this matter? Instrumental as he is to FPJ's candidacy, he should tell the people how the opposition would react to the decision of the high court on the citizenship case against FPJ, whatever it would be. Even FPJ's running mate, Loren Legarda, is eerily mum on the issue.

Quo vadis, Philippines?

—GABRIEL MARQUEZ
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Personal opinion or survey results

THE ALLEGED presidential election survey results published in the newspapers are baseless and mere opinions of the supposed surveyors that are accepted by people who cannot form their own opinions. The situation is made worse by some media practitioners who comment on or even endorse the results as if they were true. I think they are pure hogwash.

I have voted for presidents since Quirino. Until Marcos became president there were no election surveys that influenced voters and this may help explain why the people elected good presidents on the basis only of their own knowledge or assessment of the candidates. It was only when Estrada ran for president that poll surveys came about, which, because they favored Estrada, may have helped bring about the disaster that was his presidency.

I have never met any surveyor or pollster who asked me who my presidential candidate is, and neither have any of my friends and relatives. So I decided to test the validity of the position of the alleged surveyors that their percentages were the results of actual surveys done far and wide and from a broad cross-section of the population.

From Quezon City, where I live, I have recently gone around casually asking acquaintances in Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna and Batangas where I have friends and small pieces of property to visit. I never met anyone who said a pollster has asked him who his presidential candidate is. I later joined a tour that led me up to the last town of Ilocos Norte and made the same survey.

I speak Ilocano and Tagalog and so I could establish some rapport with the people I met in my survey. I talked with the rich and poor, teachers and students, professionals and ordinary workers, and I can certify that I never met anyone who said that a pollster asked him to name his presidential candidate. His/her answer was often the shaking of the head or no, he/she had not met any pollster.

There were many people who volunteered the name of their candidate. When asked why, they replied that their choice was in accordance with the surveys published in the newspapers or announced on TV and radio, and they asked rhetorically why waste your vote on another candidate who is not a winner? What this proves is that many people have no personal opinion but accept the opinions of the alleged surveyors as to the merits and "winnability" of the candidates. It only proves the herd instinct of many gullible voters.

I hope that media, especially the opinion makers, urge their readers and viewers to make their own study of the personal merits of the candidates. They should not publish or endorse the alleged results of supposed election surveys as if they were the verified truth. My own survey has convinced me that they are baseless and may have just been made inside the offices of the surveyors and intended to favor their own candidates.

—SILVERIO F. AQUINO,
29 Road 14, Project 8,
Quezon City

Springboard for debate, discussion

I WENT to see the P170-million Light and Sound Museum in Intramuros after Ambeth Ocampo's article whetted my appetite. And his observations were correct to the last detail.

Despite the protestations of Ma. Carissa Coscoluella that the museum "was never meant to be a springboard for debate and discussion," their depiction of our nation's history is in fact contestable and debatable.

Coscolluela may not be allowed to argue against the project lest she receive a tongue-lashing from her boss, but the Filipino nation is not in the employ of Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon. Gordon claims that the museum "aims to inspire Filipinos to break through the walls of their mind," and yet on record, his office tells us that "this is not and should not be a springboard for debate and discussion." Are we in the Twilight Zone here?

And for heaven's sake, a cease and desist order certainly means that there is an objection.

—CHRIS VILLANUEVA,
14 National Highway,
Subic, Zambales

Working with WHO vs AIDS, TB, malaria

COMMENTARY

Dr. Jack C. Chow

MODERN commerce and rapid transportation increasingly expose more and more people to rapidly evolving diseases, such as SARS or avian flu. All the while, the world continues to struggle against entrenched and globalized diseases, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which are accelerating because of underinvestment in health and conditions of poverty.

Outbreaks of avian flu and SARS, with their potential risk to humans, provoked an intensive mobilization of public health and civil society. This adds to the ongoing struggle against the potent diseases of tuberculosis (TB) and malaria, which are challenging the Philippines. About 250,000 people contract TB nationwide and more than 45,000 people die annually from this disease, making it the sixth leading cause of mortality. Malaria is endemic in 65 of the 78 provinces, putting the lives of 11 million people at risk.

Against this backdrop, the HIV/AIDS pandemic looms ever larger. Prevailing stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS deter people from voluntary testing and accessing adequate information and existing services. Education is essential: according to a recent survey, only 1.9% of sexually active people under 24 years of age, know any of key steps they can take to prevent contracting or spreading HIV.

To confront these rapidly evolving public health challenges, it is increasingly evident that the collective response must also evolve to produce effective, lasting results that save lives, mitigate burdens, and de-stigmatize illnesses. Partnerships, both at global and national level, bring together abilities from many different sources, and combine them in ways that reinforce one another. With a grant from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the Philippines now has stronger financial support to battle HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. Still needed are investments to strengthen health systems and train the national health workforce.

The next critical phase is converting financial and human resources into effective public health outcomes - people properly treated with effective medicines, the reduction in the number of new infections, care to those currently suffering. The design and implementation of comprehensive AIDS, TB and malaria programs takes both expertise and sustained commitment. Operating partnerships at the country and community levels will be essential to combine expertise from a number of sources and synthesize them effectively. The World Health Organization (WHO) provides the technical expertise necessary. WHO's technical experts operate in 147 countries to ensure that interventions are tailored and implemented according to country needs.

Together with a wide range of partners from public and private sectors, NGOs and civil society, WHO assists the Philippines' national effort to detect and treat TB. DOTS, a multi-pronged cost-effective strategy to control TB, has proved highly successful in ensuring that patients take their medicines properly and boost treatment success rates.

This past World AIDS Day, WHO and its global partners launched the ambitious "3 by 5" strategy aimed at getting three million people living with AIDS worldwide on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment by the end of 2005. ARV treatment is the only way to demystify the disease and to de-stigmatize people living with HIV and AIDS. For the Philippines this will involve the strengthening of comprehensive programs to educate vulnerable and poor people on how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Ultimately this will lead to behaviour change and help to prevent new HIV infections.

As the toll from AIDS, TB and malaria continues to rise, the collective response must be rapid, not just to the individual challenge posed by a single disease, but also to build a lasting public health infrastructure that is sufficiently robust to confront numerous and multi-faceted challenges. Partnerships, coalitions, and alliances are an important type of organized response in public health. Equally important is assuring that health systems are built with sufficient resources to confront future crises effectively.

The Philippines can definitely show the way in creating innovative means to attain these goals by supporting local partnerships among academia, the private sector and NGOs to mobilize resources to fight HIV/AIDS. Ever-stronger linkages with global health institutions like WHO will help to secure the live-saving investments in public health and development now and into the future.

Dr. Jack C. Chow, is the assistant director-general (HIV/AIDS-Tuberculosis-Malaria) of the World Health Organization.

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THE SHOW went on for the Panagbenga, with rain-drenched children doing the performance that made city officials proud and their parents worried sick.
TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Criticism of rain-soaked fest keeps Baguio officials busy

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Baguio Mayor Bernardo Vergara suspended classes here on Monday, following a backlash over the Baguio Flower Festival parade, which proceeded on Saturday despite a heavy downpour.

City officials said the suspension allowed some 4,000 parade participants from local elementary and high schools and universities to recover from the weekend festivities.

Health officials began monitoring hospitals and clinics to check on the children's condition, after parents, teachers and child rights advocates swamped City Hall with irate telephone calls, condemning officials for prioritizing tourism over the welfare of the students.

A family had complained to child rights lawyer Mia Cawed about the festival organizers. Cawed, Baguio-Benguet president of the Lady Lawyers' League of the Philippines, said the parents of a child, who was stricken ill after participating in the parade, were blaming the government.

The participants danced half-naked in the streets while soaking wet from the long afternoon downpour.

Local weather observers had anticipated the rains since Friday when a tropical depression was forecast to hit Eastern Visayas last week.

City officials were busy parrying speculations that the presence of the administration party's K-4 coalition forced them to proceed with the parade, despite protests from the children's parents.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan, Lakas-CMD's Cordillera coordinator, and Vergara, Nationalist People's Coalition's Baguio coordinator, belong to the K-4 coalition.

Although President Macapagal-Arroyo, the festival's guest of honor, failed to show up, her senatorial slate joined the parade.

But officials said the parade proceeded on its own, without any prodding from the candidates.

"It was nothing like that. We were more concerned about our other guests, because we had a mayor from Mexico and a US senator," said Benedicto Alhambra, city tourism officer.

Sen. Jesse Anderson Lujan of Guam was invited to join the parade with the street dancers, along with Mayor Abraham Ponce Guadarrama of Taxco City in Mexico. Also present were mayors of six Luzon towns and cities.

"But the rains poured just as the parade started, and it proceeded from sheer momentum," Alhambra said.

The INQUIRER on Saturday spoke to several parents, who were rushing to fetch their children from the parade.

A few of them rushed to Domogan and Vergara at the Burnham Park's Athletic Bowl to chastise them.

SOME of the people who didn't mind getting wet in the rain—candidates for senator of the administration who didn't miss the chance to enjoy attention from the crowd and media men.
DIANNE GARCIA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Mass said for 1st time in Cotabato mining area

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Mass was celebrated on Sunday at the base camp of Tampakan Mineral Resources Corp. in Barangay Tablu, Tampakan town in South Cotabato.

It was celebrated by Belgian priest Herman Flameygh, CICM.

The news about a missionary priest saying Mass at the mining firm's base camp created a stir in the wake of the Catholic Church's, particularly the diocese of Marbel's, opposition to mining in its turf.

Flameygh came all the way from Baguio City where he served as parish priest at the Philex Mining community for several years.

The Mass was attended by personnel of the mining company, B'laan lumad, municipal and barangay officials, teachers and residents in the project area.

Since the start of mineral exploration about 10 years ago, no Mass was ever held in the area as priests of the Marbel diocese were told to refrain from doing so.

Flameygh, however, said he was supportive of responsible mining.

During Mass, he said the local community in Baguio grew and developed as a result of mining activities in the area.

For him, mining is not at all evil as it also has a positive impact on the lives of people.

"Mining is not evil, mining can be constructive. The question is, 'Can a miner be a good Christian? The answer is 'yes,' provided he becomes a good miner, just like the rest of us who can be good Christians if we are living true to our roles in society," Flameygh said in his homily.

He urged local Church leaders to open their minds and give the mining company a chance to develop the area.

"We are losing our best people to other countries because we don't give them the opportunities here. The mining industry has a lot to offer and we should give the industry a chance," he said.

Local residents who attended Mass wished there would be more such activity in the area soon.

Lino Tokaydo, a B'laan resident of Barangay Danlag which is part of the mining development site, said "we want Mass held here at least once a month."

"The town proper is far from here. We want our children to receive the holy sacrament of baptism."

All the five tribal communities have shown all-out support to the mining project to the dismay of local Church leaders. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

DA exec cries foul over PAGC graft report

COTABATO CITY—The head of the Department of Agriculture in Central Mindanao expressed surprise over the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) report linking him and six others, including his wife, to alleged corruption in government.

"This is unfair because I just learned about the (graft) case in the INQUIRER on Saturday," said agriculture regional director Sumail Sekak, who complained that the story was relayed to the media before the PAGC could notify the respondents.

"I have yet to receive the formal complaint and know the complainants before answering the charges," said Sekak, whose wife Kunesa, former social welfare director for Central Mindanao, has also been included in the PAGC charge sheet.

The PAGC said the officials failed to file detailed statements of assets and liabilities. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pampanga transport grinds to halt at start of 2-day strike

By Jun Malig and Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—Classes were suspended and thousands of commuters were stranded in Pampanga on Monday at the start of a two-day strike by 67,000 drivers demanding a P1 fare increase and the immediate rollback in oil prices.

The strike, held in the province's 20 towns and two cities, paralyzed transport by 80 percent, according to Waldy Santos, spokesperson of the Pampanga chapter of the Pinag-isang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston).

Santos said at least 49 associations of jeepney, tricycle and mini-bus drivers joined the strike. He said the biggest group, the 18,000-strong Pangkalahatang Samahan ng Drivers sa Angeles, went in full force.

Piston said the series of price increases since February 2002 have totaled P5.38 per liter and without any corresponding fare increase.

Pedro Sebastian, who has been plying the Villa-Pampang route here in the last 40 years, was among those who joined the strike.

"Life is so difficult for drivers now," he told the INQUIRER as he took a break from convincing tricycle drivers to cooperate in the protest.

In his case, he said he sets aside more than P200 daily to buy at least 11 liters of diesel, which fetches P18.30 on Monday.

Then, he has to pay at least P250 for the boundary or the rental of his jeep.

"After driving for 12 hours, we only earn a maximum of P100 at the end of the day. That amount is only enough to buy two kilos of rice and some dried fish. How can we survive?" Sebastian said.

Piston said the daily income of provincial drivers like Sebastian was less than a fourth of the P534 cost-of-living allowance that a Filipino family needs daily.

Iloilo transport groups plan strike today for fare hike

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Transport groups start a two-day strike today to demand a P1 increase in minimum fare and the scrapping of a city ordinance that bars the entry of public utility vehicles from the province to the city's main streets.

Members of the Pinag-isang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (Piston) in Iloilo and the Hugpong Transport, an alliance of at least 26 transport groups in the city and province, will stop plying their routes starting midnight today until midnight of Feb. 26.

Their member-associations, especially those in key routes in the city, had declared their participation in the strike.

But the Federation of Iloilo Drivers Association (Fida), a province-based association of jeepney operators and drivers, and its counterpart in the city, the Iloilo City Alliance of Drivers Association (Icada), would not join the strike.

Militant groups led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) will put up protest centers in key intersections in the city in support of the strike, said Bayan-Panay chair Jeffrey Celiz.

Bayan will lead a noise barrage and rally as part of coordinated protest actions in commemoration of the 18th anniversary of the People Power I uprising.

Piston-Iloilo filed a petition for a fare increase before the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board in Western Visayas last week.

The group said the increase was necessary because the average take home pay of drivers dropped by 36 percent from P186.25 per day in 2000 to P119.75 daily in 2003 because of repeated increases in oil prices.

The Hugpong Transport demanded a rollback of oil prices and repeal of the Oil Deregulation Law, saying the law has become a "license ... to exact huge profits from poor drivers and small operators."

The groups are also calling for the scrapping of Ordinance No. 2002-408 that prohibits the entry of jeepneys, buses and vans from the province to the city's main streets to reduce traffic congestion in the city.

'Ruling true will of Marcos'

From page A1

might send me to jail. Let's just play along for now. Erap is sure to win. He owes me a great deal,'" Cobarrubias said in Filipino.

But Imelda did not just want a better deal under an Erap presidency, she wanted to be part of the new administration.

According to Cobarrubias, she was dispatched to Estrada to suggest to him that he make Imelda his vice presidential running mate.

"But Erap's answer was, 'Cherry, that's not possible, it's too controversial. Tell her, there are so many Marcos loyalists, why doesn't she just help me'," she said.

Imelda was devastated and angered by Estrada's response.

Her main concern being to maintain her "high profile" in the media, Imelda then decided to launch a mock run for the presidency, according to Cobarrubias.

"We thought she was serious, it turns out she was just trying to make trouble," said Cobarrubias, who vigorously campaigned for Imelda as the head of the True Marcos Loyalists Headquarters.

Imelda was one of 11 presidential candidates in the 1998 elections but she withdrew a week before the polls and declared her support for Estrada.

True enough, within a month of sitting in Malacañang, Estrada was announcing a policy of striking a deal with the Marcoses over the ill-gotten wealth, justifying it as a way "to help the poor."

3 attempted deals

There were at least three reported attempts at a settlement exposed by the INQUIRER during the short-lived Estrada presidency.

The first, called "Project Recovery," was a secret operation headed by Estrada's chief policeman, now presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson, and his executive secretary, now opposition Rep. Ronaldo Zamora. It left the Presidential Commission on Good Government out of the picture.

At a subsequent Senate investigation, it was learned that the operation was being labeled a "private" effort to recover "hidden treasure" and not "hidden wealth," presumably to take advantage of a presidential decree giving the private finders 25 percent of the loot.

Estrada also tried to revive the 1993 Marcos-Gunigundo agreement signed during the Ramos administration, but his plans were blocked by the Supreme Court decision in December 1998 nullifying the deal and enjoining the government from pursuing any settlement with the Marcoses.

At about the time the Supreme Court's decision was handed down, PCGG Commissioner Magdangal Elma was ordered to go to Hawaii to facilitate a three-way settlement between the PCGG, the Estrada administration and the 10,000 Marcos human rights victims.

The Sandiganbayan, however, rejected the deal which would have surrendered $150 million of the $630-million escrow deposits to the rights abuse claimants.

INQUIRER sources close to the Marcoses also repeatedly disclosed that negotiations for a "global settlement involving all Marcos assets" outside of the escrow account were being pursued by the Estrada administration.

In the end, no settlement deal with the Marcoses was ever perfected or implemented.

Two years into his term, Estrada was toppled for incompetence and corruption by the second Edsa "People Power" uprising.

Swiss deposits

The Sandiganbayan proceeded with the forfeiture trial on the $386 million in Marcos Swiss deposits, now grown to $683 million. After 17 years of litigation, the anti-graft court on Jan. 22, 2004 proceeded to execute the Supreme Court decision declaring the funds ill-gotten and forfeited and ordered the Philippine National Bank to transfer the $683 million to the government.

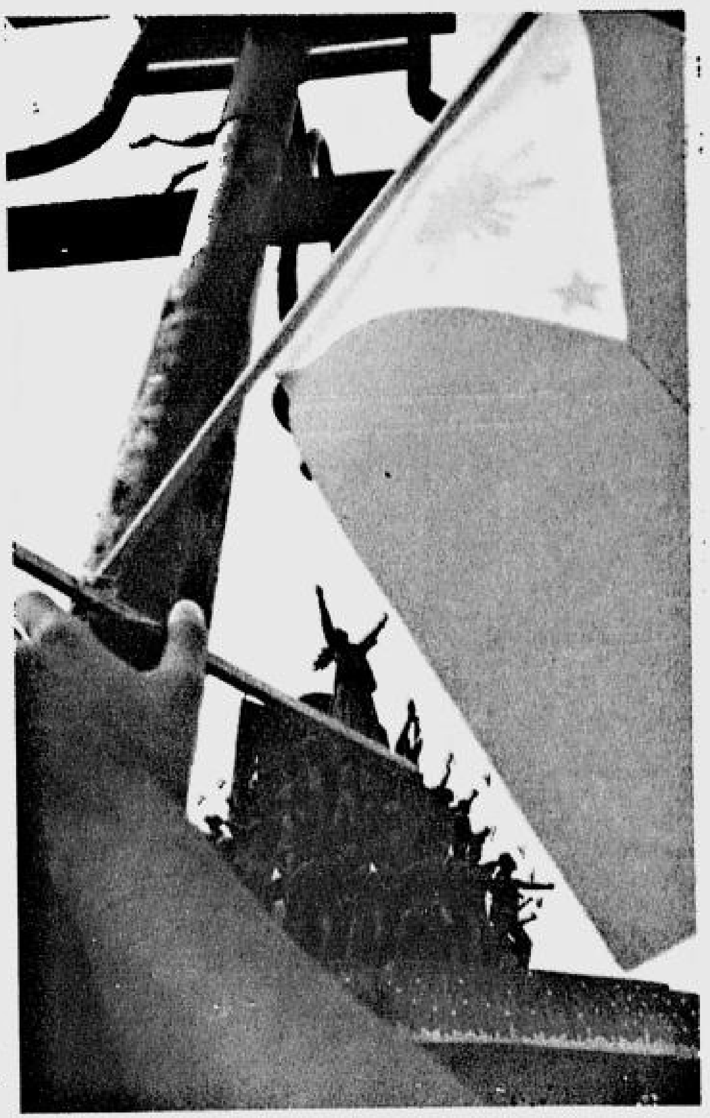
Cobarrubias said she was coming forward with her story about her participation in the attempt to withdraw the $386 million in Marcos Swiss deposits to complete the story, "for the Filipino people to understand that the Supreme Court decision forfeiting the money in favor of the government serves as a true closure on the issue of ill-gotten wealth."

"It is not blood money of the human rights victims as Selda [the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya] says. It is not stolen money. It belongs to the old man [Marcos]. It appears like loot because of Mrs. Marcos' delay in implementing the compromise agreement," she said.

The Supreme Court's decision was, "in fact, a realization of the true will of the late President Marcos," according to Cobarrubias, who said she remains loyal to the "legacy of the former strongman."

Cobarrubias and three other former close friends and confidantes of Imelda have written a book about their relationship with the former first lady. The book is now in the final stages of production with a US-based publisher and is due for release this year.

According to Cobarrubias, the book's first line says it all: "Imelda Romualdez Marcos caused it all."



READY FOR RITES: Metro Manila Development Authority workers decorate the Edsa People Power Monument for the 18th anniversary celebration of the Edsa uprising. JOAN BONDOC

Day Three, Feb. 24, 1986

From page A1

rocks piled up.

3 a.m.: Armed Forces chief Fabian Ver is still unable to locate dzRB, which is very near Malacañang.

3:30 a.m.: At Camp Crame, Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile warns of oncoming two armored personnel carriers. Human barricades led by nuns and priests prepare to repel APCs.

4 a.m.: In Washington, US President Ronald Reagan refuses to personally tell Marcos to step down but agrees to give him asylum. US Secretary of State George Shultz calls Ambassador Stephen Bosworth in Manila with instructions to tell Marcos "his time is up."

5 a.m.: Marcos rejects US stand. He vows over radio: "We'll wipe them out. It is obvious they are committing rebellion."

Ver and Army commander Maj. Gen. Josephus Ramas give go-signal for all-out attack on Edsa using tear gas, gun ships, jet bombers and Marine artillery.

At Crame, AFP Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos calls for civilian reinforcements amid report that large loyalist military force is being assembled.

Rebel soldiers tearfully prepare for battle and request that absolution be given them. They sing the Philippine Military Academy hymn and bid one another farewell.

5:15 a.m.: Tear gas explodes outside Camp Aguinaldo on Santolan. Marcos loyalist soldiers led by Col. Braulio Balbas enter camp and take position at golf course fronting Crame.

More tear gas canisters are launched, but strong breeze blows gas back to loyalist troops.

6 a.m.: Tension rises as helicopters approach Crame. Shortly, seven Sikorskys armed with rockets and cannons land inside camp. Col. Antonio Sotelo and his entire Air Force 15th Strike Wing defect.

Balbas trains awesome firepower on Crame after hearing exaggerated account of rebel strength from Rodolfo Estrellado of military intelligence. Unknown to Balbas, Estrellado has joined rebel side.

Aboard gunboat, Commodore Tagumpay Jardiniano announces to his 50 officers that he is supporting Ramos-Enrile forces. Officers rejoice after minutes of silence.

Frigate soon drops anchor off Pasig River with guns trained on Malacañang.

6:30 a.m.: Keithley announces that Ver and Marcos and his family have fled the country.

7:30 a.m.: Triumphant Enrile and Ramos address ecstatic crowd outside Crame. Two fighter planes with orders to bomb camp tilt their wings and head toward Clark Air Base in Pampanga.

9 a.m.: To show they have not fled, Marcos appears with his family and his generals on Channel 4. He announces the lifting of his "maximum tolerance" policy and declares nationwide state of emergency.

Ramas issues "kill" order to Balbas. In reply, Balbas says he and his men are looking for maps.

9:20 a.m.: Ramas again orders Balbas to fire. Balbas answers: "Sir, I am still positioning the cannons."

9:50 a.m.: Rebel soldiers and loyalist soldiers continue to exchange fire for control of Channel 4. After a demonstrator waving a Cory banner climbs the wall of the station, a wounded soldier comes out in surrender.

Marcos' press conference is cut off the air.

10:15 a.m.: Rebel soldiers inflict slight damage on Malacañang to indicate their capacity to strike.

11:30 a.m.: People take over

Noon: Three rebel gunships destroy choppers in Villamor Air Base.

12:30 p.m.: Marines led by Balbas withdraw from Aguinaldo.

1:25 p.m.: Channel 4 resumes broadcast, delivering news of more defections.

3 p.m.: With more and more people converging on Edsa and surrounding areas, Singaporean Ambassador Peter Sung offers to fly Marcoses to his country. Marcos refuses.

4:30 p.m.: Ver and Ramas decide to launch final "suicide assault."

Corazon Aquino shows up on makeshift stage in front of Philippine Overseas Employment Agency office on Edsa and delivers a brief pep-talk.

6 p.m.: In Washington, Reagan agrees to make public call for Marcos' resignation.

Philippine Airlines chair Roman Cruz Jr. addresses his resignation letter from the national flag carrier to Aquino, making him the first public official to recognize her as duly elected President.

7:30 p.m.: The United States endorses Aquino's provisional government.

8:10 p.m.: Marcos and his entire family appear on television. He appeals to loyalist civilians to go to Mendiola and calls on people to obey only orders issued by him as "duly constituted authority." He declares 6 p.m.-6 a.m. curfew.

9 p.m.: Meeting between Aquino and Ramos-Enrile group ends with decision that her inauguration as President will be held at Club Filipino in San Juan the following morning.

11 p.m.: In Malacañang, the Marcos children's dinner with Chief Justice Ramon Aquino and his son ends. Present are Imee and Irene and their respective husbands, Tommy Manotoc and Greggy Araneta, and Marcos Jr., who is dressed in fatigues.

Outside, people defy announced curfew and continue to roam streets of Manila.

Officials who withdraw support for Marcos: Ret. Gen. Guillermo Picache of National Pollution Control, Maj. Francisco Baula Jr., Col. Romy David of Clark Air Base, entire 5th Fighter Wing at Basa Air Base in Pampanga, Commodore Serapio Martillano, Col. Carlos Taniega, Brig. Gen. Augustus Paiso of AFP planning unit, Col. Godofredo Rios of V. Luna Hospital. ***(To be continued)***

Sources: "Chronology of a Revolution" by Angela Stuart Santiago, "Walang Himala: Himagsikan sa Edsa" by Angela Stuart Santiago, "The Quartet Tiger Moon" by Quijano de Manila, "People Power: The Philippine Revolution of 1986," "Bayan Ko" and PDI archives

Lessons from 'Miracle of Edsa'

From page A1

many of the best hands and minds that can help build the country.

"The Miracle of Edsa" happened because the Filipino people were united and were willing to make sacrifices in order to achieve change. People from all walks of life—businessmen, ordinary public servants, homemakers, students, laborers and farmers—took positive individual and collective action in order to see our democracy restored.

These people are the true heroes of Edsa, and embody the true meaning of "People Power."

Everywhere, "People Power" became the symbol of democracy, and countries all around the world looked up to us as the example of peaceful change. When the South Koreans changed presidents, when the Berlin Wall came down, when apartheid was dismantled in South Africa, it was our example that led the way.

Building the country

We laid the groundwork for the Philippines to become a newly industrialized country (NIC) by 2000. Investor confidence was high, the government enjoyed the support of the majority, and there was an overall spirit of "Yes, the Filipino Can!"

In 1988, we posted a 7.7-percent GDP (gross domestic product) growth rate, which had never been reached before and never matched since. In almost 25 years since 1980, the average GDP growth rate of the Philippines was about 3 percent, while our neighbors, such as Thailan [illegible] Singapore and Malaysia, had ab [illegible] 8 percent. Our Asean (Assoc [illegible] of Southeast Asian Nations) [illegible] bors used to look up to us as the model for development. They sent their students to learn from us and to study in our universities and research institutes.

In the '50s and '60s, the Philippines was ahead of all 10 Asean countries, and placed second behind Japan, ahead of Korea, Taiwan and China. Now, we are in the middle of the 10 Asean countries. If we are to pole-vault into the next stage of economic development, like what our neighbors have done, we need a growth rate of no less than 7-8 percent yearly for at least 15 years.

Which leads us back to our situation. By 1989, we were poised, alongside Thailand and Malaysia, for an economic takeoff. Sadly, we were faced with challenges within our own country that negated many of our gains.

We were beset with seven coup attempts, the worst of which was in December 1989, which shattered our confidence and resulted in capital flight. Two natural disasters—the Cabanatuan earthquake of 1990 and the Pinatubo eruptions in 1991—followed. Had these not occurred, we would have been well on our way toward our takeoff.

Rekindling the spirit

The Spirit of Edsa is alive and well—if only we can get our people to relate with it with a sense of purpose, as they did in 1986. But if we expect our people to do this, many of our leaders must show the way through example. We cannot expect from our people what we ourselves are not prepared to do.

We must start by empowering our people. There are almost 42,000 barangays all over the country, and if we can get our fellow Filipinos to be involved and to participate in the basic level of our government, we can trigger a transformation.

On May 10, 2004, we will be faced with the most crucial election ever to be held in the country, and this election must truly reflect the will of the people. We are all called upon to defend our democracy, and there is no greater love for country at this time than to ensure that our elections are clean, honest and truly reflective of the will of the people.

In every barangay, municipality, city and province, we must rally our people together, to mobilize and to act so that they can stand proud that in their particular community, the true will of the people was expressed. Only when the results of the election reflect the true will of the people—vox populi, vox dei—can we have peace, development, economic growth and triumph over poverty.

When we can answer yes with conviction to the question, "Is the Filipino worth dying for?" and be prepared to make the necessary sacrifice, like Ninoy Aquino did in 1983, then we have rekindled the spirit of Edsa in our minds, hearts and souls.

On our part, Namfrel remains committed to be as vigilant to help safeguard the credibility of the elections in May. A credible election means the winners would secure the necessary mandate from the people, and for us to have political and economic stability, we must defend this election from all forms of manipulation.

At the same time, each voter must reflect, for all of us have the responsibility to make a conscientious choice, to determine whether the candidates have the competence, credibility and commitment to lead us the next six years.

We are now at a crossroads—while we have the opportunity to reshape our destiny, to begin a new politics of accountability and good governance—we might just as easily lose all of what we had gained. A failure of the elections in May in presenting a clear and undisputed mandate for the winners could result in conflict and invite forces to resort to extraconstitutional means in resolving the issue. This is a challenge that we must face squarely, and everyone should play a part in preserving our democracy.

The road ahead

Given all these reflections, 18 years after Edsa, the next president must have the vision to plan for the long term so that we will have a high and consistent growth rate of at least 8 percent. This will enable us to get on the same footing with our Asean neighbors. The need to achieve this level of growth gains an added dimension than the national perspective alone, because our Asean leaders have committed to an Asean Economic Community of 500 million consumers and 10 economies in strategic alliance. Further, we are moving to enlarge our Asean community to Asean+4—namely China, Japan, Korea and India—in a time framework reflective of the development gap within Asean.

The horizons for our development must span at least 20 years, instead of being limited to just six years to match the prerogatives of each administration. Instead of building on the gains of its predecessor, each incoming administration starts anew and often builds from scratch.

For many of our neighbors, they have had leaders who remained committed to a road map of 20 or more years and had the political will to ensure that the programs will succeed. Such is the case for Singapore, and in Malaysia, which is on its way to achieve its Malaysia Vision 2020. Incidentally, before Prime Minister Mahathir stepped down in October 2003, he initiated the creation of a plan until the year 2040.

In China, where I joined President Corazon Aquino in her state visit, Premier Deng Xiaoping committed to steer China to an annual GDP growth rate of at least 8 percent until the year 2000—a projection that they had matched. In fact, since 1950, China has maintained an average growth rate of 8 percent.

Therefore, we need the creation of a master plan that will map our development for at least 25 years and will not be limited by changes of administration. Such plan will be the road map for development for each of the sectors of the economy—agriculture, industry and services, and taking into consideration the needs of our people—education, jobs, housing, social services, physical infrastructure, et al.

This is easier said than done and needs the cooperation and participation of both the government and the private sector. We need proper representation for all stakeholders, and this needs the value of inclusiveness and an attitude of constructive dialogue. All substance and accountability.

With this road map in place, founded on a strengthened and empowered government bureaucracy, a motivated and innovative private sector, and committed individuals, the programs would continue regardless of who the next president will be.

President Macapagal-Arroyo spelled it out most aptly in her four core beliefs that she mentioned during her inauguration, and these are reminders of what still needs to be done. In issuing the challenge for us to eradicate poverty in our country, we have to rise above the limitations in our politics and society.

First, we must improve moral standards in government and society in order to provide a strong foundation for good governance.

Second, we must change the character of our politics in order to create fertile ground for true reforms. Our politics of personality and patronage must give way to a new politics of party programs and process of dialogue with the people. I would like to point out that one reform that three Presidents (Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Ms Macapagal) have committed to, but we still have yet to achieve, is the nationwide automation of our elections.

And finally, leadership by example—we should promote solid traits such as work ethic and a dignified lifestyle, matching action to rhetoric; performing rather than grandstanding.

The stakes are high and we, the Filipino people, must realize that things that we do in the present pave the road to the future. Therefore, if we do not start today, we cannot expect to have a better tomorrow. It is my hope that we can start within our own barangays—for if we begin to address our national problems within our own respective backyards, we would plant the seeds for a national renewal.

And most importantly, just like God has blessed us and made the miracle of Edsa become a reality, we should put God at the center of our lives.

Fugitive slain after taking boy hostage

By Luige del Puerto

ONE OF the men who bolted the local jail on Sunday was shot and killed after he took hostage a 3-year-old boy in Rodriguez, Rizal, the police said.

Jojie Tesoro, alias Jojit Quesoro, who faced robbery and murder charges before a Rizal court, led 14 other inmates and escaped from the Rodriguez municipal jail three weeks ago, according to Supt. Dominador Penid, town police chief.

Authorities tracked him down to a house in Kasiglahan Village in Barangay San Jose, where he had been hiding since the Feb. 5 jailbreak.

The police claimed that when Tesoro sensed the presence of lawmen in the area, he took hostage the 3-year-old son of Jose Sopena Jr., 31.

The police were able to talk Tesoro, who was armed with an improvised shotgun, into releasing the boy.

But when Tesoro learned he had been fooled, he aimed his gun at the lawman carrying the boy to safety. The policemen were left with no other choice but to "neutralize" the fugitive, Penid said.

Show of force over 'route war'

NO ELBOW ROOM
Inmates of a Western Police District station detention cell get to live the life of the proverbial sardine. The men take turns in using the hammocks that have been strung up in the cramped facility.
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THIS time the battle between tricycle and jeepney drivers in Caloocan City turned into a battle of numbers.

In a show of force yesterday, more than 100 drivers plying the Malabon (or Navotas)-Recto route parked their jeepneys on C3 Road in Caloocan City to protest the "harassment" they are getting from the tricycle drivers.

But they were easily outnumbered by the tricycle drivers, who parked more than 300 tricycles around the jeepney men's picket line.

The showdown paralyzed transportation in key routes in the city from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., forcing commuters to walk.

The battle appeared to have been resolved, however, after Mayor Rey Malonzo met with the leaders of both groups in the afternoon.

Malonzo rerouted the jeepney drivers anew, but the tricycle drivers insisted the mayor was still partial to the jeepney drivers.

The tricycle drivers have been complaining that the jeepney drivers have been encroaching on their routes, taking away their passengers.

During the meeting, the tricycle groups quarreled among themselves, as some groups who wanted the jeepneys out of their routes proposed to divert the jeepneys to the other avenues.

But the affected tricycle drivers reacted strongly.

The tricycle drivers actually wanted the jeepney drivers to go back to their original route.

The jeepneys used to pass through Monumento Circle, using Samson Road. But when the local government tried to ease traffic in Monumento Circle, the jeeps were rerouted to C3 and 5th Avenue.

Malonzo also warned the tricycle drivers that they would be arrested and their franchise would be revoked should they harass the jeepney drivers again.

Cops note drug menace in 19 Makati barangays

By Margaux Ortiz

THE NATIONAL police's Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operation Task Force (PNP-AIDSOTF) and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) have classified 19 Makati City communities as areas under "threat" from illegal drug offenders.

The report came after the city government had stepped up its drive against illegal drugs.

Senior Supt. Jovito Gutierrez Jr., Makati police chief, said in a report that based on the PNP and PDEA guidelines, one percent of the population in the affected communities is involved in illegal drugs.

Gutierrez said the list of "threatened" barangay units include Pio del Pilar, La Paz, Palanan, Pinagkaisahan, Pembo, Poblacion, Singkamas, San Antonio, San Isidro, South Side, South Cembo, West Rembo, Forbes Park, San Lorenzo, Comembo, Cembo and Urdaneta.

The police chief added that only Barangay Rizal—where 1 to 2.49 percent of the population is involved in drugs—has been categorized as "less seriously affected."

Gutierrez also reported that the Philippine National Police and PDEA have cleared 14 barangays of drug activities since intensive operations began in June 2003.

Gutierrez said that the cleared barangay units represent 42 percent of the total communities in Makati.

METROBRIEFS

Ex-NBI man killed

ALBERT Rivera, 45, a former National Bureau of Investigation agent, on Sunday was shot and killed, while PO1 John Palonson, 34, of the Western Police District, was wounded when the two men fought over a narrow parking space in Caloocan City. Investigators said the incident happened in front of Rivera's house on Esperanza and Gen. Luna streets at about 4 p.m. Palonson, who is renting a room in Rivera's house, got into a fight with his landlord when he insisted on parking his car in the narrow spot, police said. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Judge killer hounded

THE PRESIDENTIAL Anti-Crime Emergency Response Team has been tapped to help track down Dario Bernardo, the suspect in the killing of a judge in Binangonan, Rizal. According to Supt. Jose Samonte Gili, the suspect has so far eluded the local police tracking him down. "It is good that Pacer has been informed," Gili said. "It is a nationwide organization, and has more resources than we do." Bernardo allegedly stabbed to death Judge Paterno Tiamson at around 10 a.m. Saturday. Bernardo and Tiamson allegedly had been fighting over the boundary of their respective fish pens in Barangay Pag-asa. *Luige del Puerto*

8th body found

THE BODY of an unidentified man early morning yesterday was found in a grassy area of the Diosdado Macapagal Highway in Pasay City. "(The man could be) the eighth salvage victim found in the area," said PO2 Roderick Dean Carza. "But there's also the chance that the culprits wanted the killing to look like a summary execution." Carza said the body, which was full of tattoos, was already decomposing when found. The man's mouth was covered with masking tape, which was also used to tie the victim's hands and feet. *Joyce Abaño*

No illegitimate kids, only parents

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

MANY people agree with the argument of the amici curiae (friends of the court) of the Supreme Court that presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. should not be blamed for not being a natural-born Filipino on account of his being an illegitimate child.

Some legal experts argue that Poe followed the citizenship of his mother, an American citizen, when he was born outside the "sanctity" of marriage.

Why should children born out of wedlock bear the guilt of their parents? What's a marriage certificate, anyway, but a piece of paper?

There are no illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents.

* * *

If the report that President Macapagal-Arroyo allegedly offered ex-Moro leader Nur Misuari his freedom in exchange for supporting her candidacy is true, then she was ill-advised.

Norberto Gonzales, Ms Macapagal's political strategist, told a gathering in Marawi City that Misuari had agreed to support GMA in exchange for his freedom.

The President can't free Misuari even if she wants to because he is charged in court. That would be interfering in the function of the judiciary.

But methinks Gonzales' announcement had no prior knowledge or approval of Malacañang. Gonzales was reportedly servile to the Muslim rebels when he was presidential adviser on special concerns.

* * *

The recent memorandum of Director Ricardo de Leon, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), ordering all police stations to be respectable places is irrelevant and stupid.

Of course, policemen should observe proper decorum in and out of a police station, especially in the field. And, of course, a police station should be a place where citizens can run to for protection and where beat policemen report for duty.

* * *

But if you've gone to a police station lately, you'll say that De Leon's memo is not irrelevant and stupid at all. Why? Because many police stations have become places people would rather avoid.

One example was the much-publicized drinking spree at the Novaliches police station, where a cop who was celebrating his birthday was photographed kissing the breast of a dancer. The celebrant and his buddies had turned the station into a beerhouse.

If you visit a typical police station in the metropolis, I'll tell you how it is there: First of all, it stinks. The cops don't clean the toilet. If you expect cops to be courteous to people who file complaints, you'll be shocked. The desk sergeant treats a complainant like a crime suspect; he shouts at the complainant when the poor guy can't answer his questions right away because he's nervous.

Now, you still wonder why the citizenry has a very low regard for cops?

Of course, most policemen are respectable, courteous, kind and understanding. But the few who are not destroy the whole police organization.

* * *

Has Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. been successful in stopping illegal gambling in the country?

Why doesn't he take a look at the police district that he once commanded—the Western Police District (WPD) in Manila?

My sources at the WPD say that about P725,000 a week in bribes is received by a top official.

Here's the breakdown (a week): From a Boy Abang, horse racing bookie, P150,000; Apeng Sy, horse racing bookie, P25,000; SPO2 Sacueza, who maintains a bookie joint, P35,000; Buboy Go, video "karera" operator, P50,000; Randy Sy, another video karera operator, P20,000; police Inspector Go, video karera, P20,000; PO2 Perez, video karera, P20,000; Milo Samson, jueteng financier, P50,000;

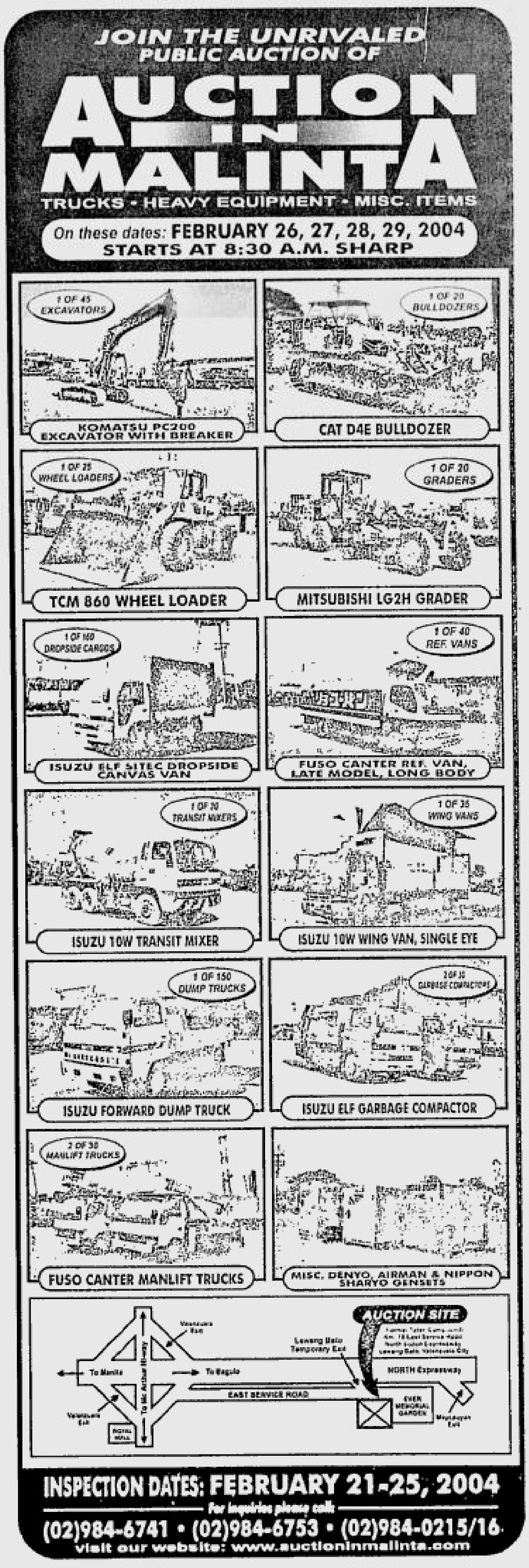
Tony Santos, jueteng operator, P50,000; Super Cat bold show, P5,000; Top Royale KTV, prostitution front, P5,000; Lito Sampaloc, bookies, P5,000; SPO4 Tony Bangit, video karera, P5,000; Tom Biu, *perya* operator, P7,500; Marissa de Castro, wife of a Colonel De Castro, *perya* operator, P7,500.

That's for illegal gambling, video karera, and *peryahan* (mini carnivals). The worst among the three is the video karera because schoolchildren spend their allowances on them.

The rest of the P525,000 comes from the traffic enforcement group, P250,000! That's the weekly "quota" from the traffic division.

The amount comes from jeepney drivers' groups whose members are being allowed to pick up passengers in prohibited areas; from cops assigned in areas with heavy vehicular traffic.

No wonder traffic in Manila is such a mess!



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Environment group set out...

From page A16

of traffic decongestion.

"Preventing us from planting trees is like depriving us of our right to clean air," she added. "We have taken the initiative to make our own greenbelt zone, and we will continue to keep it this way."

She said that "innocent" plants were being made to pay, while the real culprits that cause Katipunan's traffic problems go unpunished—undisciplined drivers, poor traffic managers, ambulant vendors, among others.

Fernando earlier said that the MMDA has the authority to decide where the trees should be planted. He also noted that environment groups had become so "emotional regarding the issue."

Oil firms urged to scale down rates

From page A16

public utility vehicles would not be forced to increase their fare.

The operators are threatening to hike fares by as much as P1.50.

The high price of diesel, coupled with the rising costs of spare parts and maintenance fees, has prompted public transport operators to actively seek an increase in fare rates from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, Concepcion said.

Although Petron, Shell and Caltex Philippines Inc. have been selling diesel fuel at discounted rates to public utility vehicle drivers in some Metro Manila service stations, Concepcion said that this is not enough to avert a fare hike.

"We had a meeting between Petron, Shell and the Department of Energy (on Monday) and we were able to raise our appeal," he said. "We appealed to both oil companies to lower diesel prices to an ideal benchmark of P15.50 to avoid a transport fare increase. They suggested a higher benchmark."

According to one source, the two oil refiners want to sell their discounted diesel at P16 per liter.

Data from the Department of Energy indicated that crude oil from Dubai had averaged $28.38 per barrel as of Feb. 20.

The prices of unleaded gasoline and diesel, meanwhile, hovered around $38.70 and $38.76 per barrel, respectively, based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products.

In the event of an actual fare hike, Concepcion urged companies nationwide to consider giving their employees transportation allowances, apart from their regular salaries.

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METRO
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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

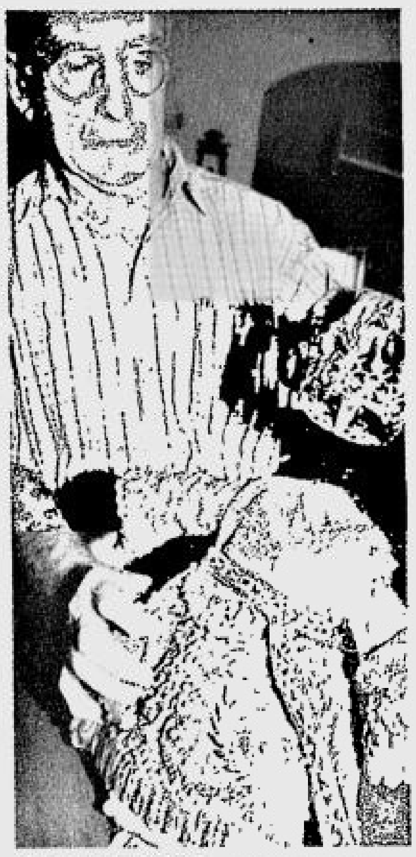
Oil firms urged to lower diesel rates

By Abigail Ho

A CONSUMER group yesterday urged two of the biggest oil firms in the country—Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.—to scale down the price of diesel fuel to be sold to public utility vehicles nationwide to avert the impending transport fare hike.

Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion yesterday said during a news briefing that the two oil refiners should sell their diesel at P15.50 per liter so that operators of

OIL FIRMS/ A15



ALL THAT'S LEFT Pedro Galende, director of the San Agustin Church in Intramuros, Manila, holds up what is left of the 300-year-old Sto. Niño image that has been stripped of its ivory parts in a robbery on Feb. 13. At left, the image, nestled in the arms of Our Lady of Consolation, before it was vandalized.

ERIK ARAZAS

Environment groups set out to defy MMDA

By Tina Santos

"NOBODY can stop us from planting trees."

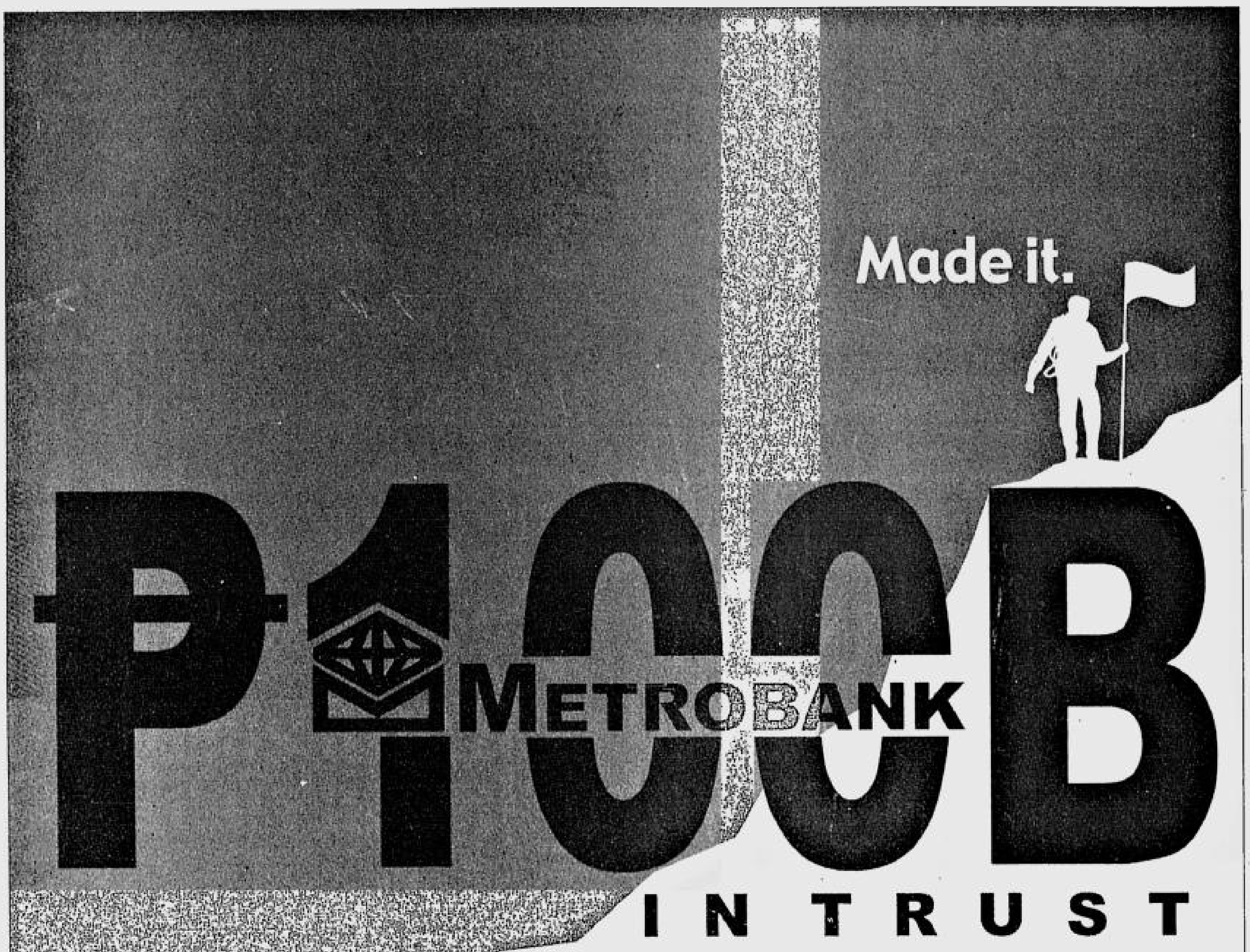
Members of environment groups yesterday assumed a defiant stance after Bayani Fernando, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair, banned the planting of trees and shrubs in public places, especially on roads and sidewalks.

Annie Cruz, who heads the Greening of Katipunan Movement and is a member of the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (Cocap), said that she and her group would continue planting trees in the area and uphold their environmental rights.

"Our tree-planting project is legitimate and ... enjoys the full support of several ecology friendly groups and government agencies, until he (Bayani) came," Cruz said.

She added that the efforts of the Katipunan community are now being sacrificed in the name

ENVIRONMENT/ A15



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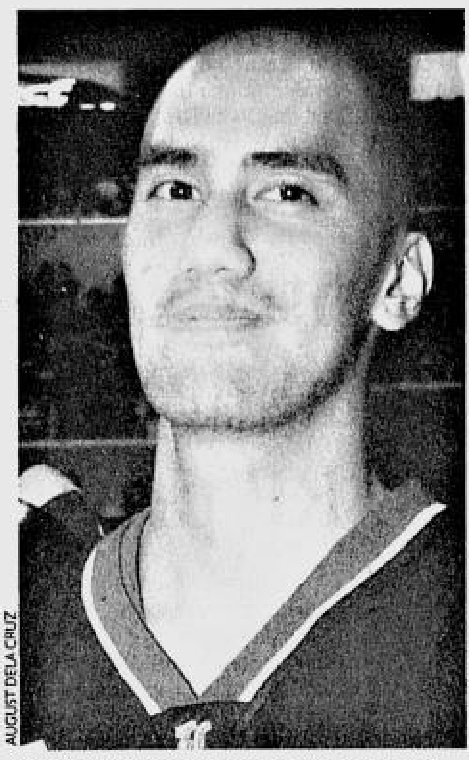
BASKETBALL: NBA - Nuggets vs Memphis; 9 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports - Vastly-improved Midwest Division rivals Denver and Memphis take on each other.

NBA Greatest Games - Pacers vs Nets, Game 5, 2002 First Round; 12 p.m.; Solar Sports - Indiana stretches New Jersey to the limit in this crucial do-or-die encounter.

TENNIS: ATP Kroger St. Jude; 7:30 p.m.; Star Sports - Check out the finals of this tennis event from Memphis.

- 2004 Australian Open; 10:30 p.m. (r); Solar Sports - Catch the replay of the first grand slam event of the year held in Melbourne.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ALVAREZ during the parade of teams—and before he realized that he wouldn't be sent in.

I'll remember my first game as a bench warmer–Alvarez

By June Navarro

AS FAR as Rich Alvarez can remember, he hadn't been benched since he started playing competitive basketball.

Two nights ago, John Moran broke the trend and the player's heart when Shell's American coach kept Alvarez on the bench during the Turbochargers' season-opening game against the Barangay Ginebra Kings.

"Of course, I'm hurt. Nobody wants to be benched for the whole game," said the 6-foot-4 Alvarez, the only No. 1 rookie pick in PBA history not to see action in his team's debut despite being in tip-top shape.

Sta. Lucia Realty kept its top draft selection Dennis Espino out of his first PBA game in 1995 due to a leg injury.

"I feel sad. Everyone will remember his first game, and for me, I will remember my first game as a bench warmer," said Alvarez an hour after the Turbochargers lost, 90-81, against the Gin Kings at the start of the PBA Gran Matador Fiesta Conference.

After the game, the Turbochargers locked themselves up in the dugout and a fuming Moran lashed out at his wards for their unsatisfactory output. A source within the Shell organization said that, out of frustration, Moran made some unsavory remarks about the team's performance.

"We were in the locker for an hour. He (Moran) told the whole team how bad we played. There's a lot of things to do. We got beaten off the offensive boards," said Alvarez.

With Alvarez, a rebounding demon during his days at the Ateneo and the Philippine Basketball League, sitting on the bench, the Turbochargers gave up 20 offensive rebounds to the Gin Kings. Ginebra dominated off both boards, 61-49.

"I think coach wants me to really know the system because he said there's a lot of information that I need to know. Before the game, he just told me to relax and gain as much information as I could," said Alvarez, the UAAP's back-to-back MVP from 2000.

"I guess I haven't had enough time to really learn the system and I don't think they chose me just to make me ride the bench."

Coming off a championship stint with Fash Liquid Detergent in the PBL barely two weeks ago, Alvarez had attended only eight practice sessions prior to Shell's battle against Ginebra.

"He said it would take years to know

I'LL REMEMBER/ A19

Bata, son in Asian 9-Ball Tour

BATA REYES PDI PHOTO

FRENNIE Reyes joins his famous father, Efren "Bata," and four other billiards aces in Team Philippines in the inaugural leg of the 2004 Asian 9-Ball Tour in Singapore starting Saturday.

The other Filipinos invited by tournament organizer ESPN are Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Warren Kiamco, Lee Van Corteza and Antonio Gabica.

Frennie, 20, is a Computer Science sophomore at Holy Angel College in Angeles City who started playing pool only three years ago.

"It's just a sport for him," said Efren. "We want him to finish college and pursue another profession."

Team sponsor Aristeo "Putch" Puyat of Puyat Sports will join the team, also including Reyes' manager, Rolly Vicente, on Friday.

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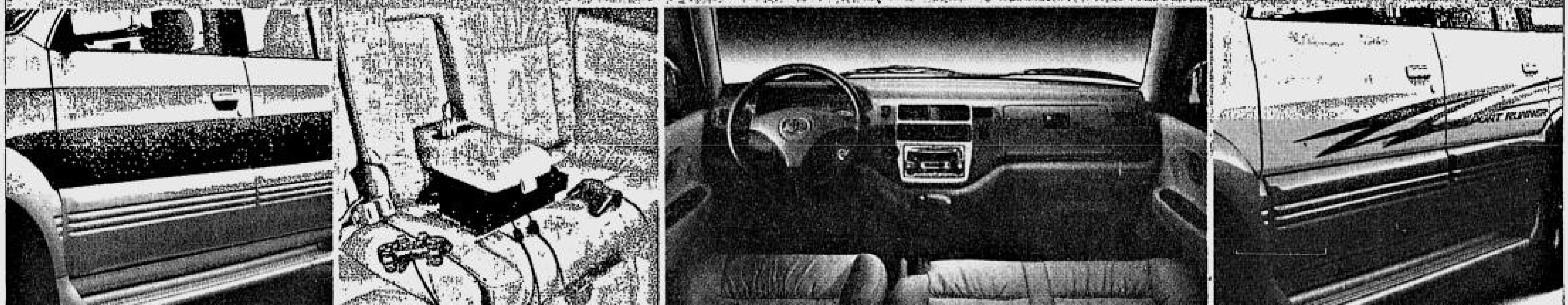

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Estimo: Abundo misled chess directors

ESTIMO: Feb. 19 meeting illegal

LAWYER Sammy Estimo yesterday belied published reports that he had been relieved as secretary general of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and replaced by executive editor Toti Abundo.

Estimo said the recommendation of the NCFP chair, lawyer Andres Gatmaitan, to ask him "to take a leave of absence" while the NCFP board looks into all transactions of the federation during his tenure carries no weight because the supposed Feb. 19 board meeting was an "unlawfully called."

In a press statement, Estimo explained that under the NCFP by-laws, it is only the president (lawyer Mat Defensor) or the secretary general who is empowered to call a board meeting.

Estimo also said that since there was no quorum during the Feb. 19 meeting, "no official resolutions and/or decisions could have been arrived at."

In fact, he said, NCFP vice president Gen. Arturo Carrilo reminded the six other directors present not to proceed with the deliberations because there was no quorum.

Estimo accused NCFP executive director Casto "Toti" Abundo of "maliciously misleading" the directors by presenting incorrect facts during the meeting.

The secretary general also refuted the charges brought up against him and Grandmaster Eugene Torre and said he would distribute to the directors their rebuttal to the allegations.

In a report that came out Monday, Abundo, also the World Chess Federation's ratings administrator and chief international arbiter, accused Estimo of "usurping and abusing his power" and of failing to inform the board members about meetings.

In line with the charges leveled against Estimo, NCFP treasurer Antonio Marcaida said in the same report that the NCFP will conduct an audit of the federation's bank accounts.

Marcaida said they would ask the accounting firm Sycip, Gorres & Velayo to conduct the audit.

Estimo welcomed the investigation and the audit, saying "the truth will eventually come out and prevail."

DHL-RP OPEN

Amazing Prom top Thai bet

By Jong Arcano

THAILAND'S "strike force" will not be around but young sensation Prom Meesawat will be there to fight for his country's pride in the 88th DHL Philippine Open starting Thursday at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

Tongchai Jaidee, winner of the Myanmar Open and the $1.2 million Malaysian Open the past two weeks, along with Boonchu Ruangkit and Prayad Marksaeng have all begged off from the $150,000 tournament, leaving Meesawat and another Thai hotshot, Jamnian Chitprasong, to aim for a third straight victory by a Thai in the Asian Tour.

The 19-year-old Meesawat won the Junior World crown and the last two Putra Cup individual titles before he turned pro this year.

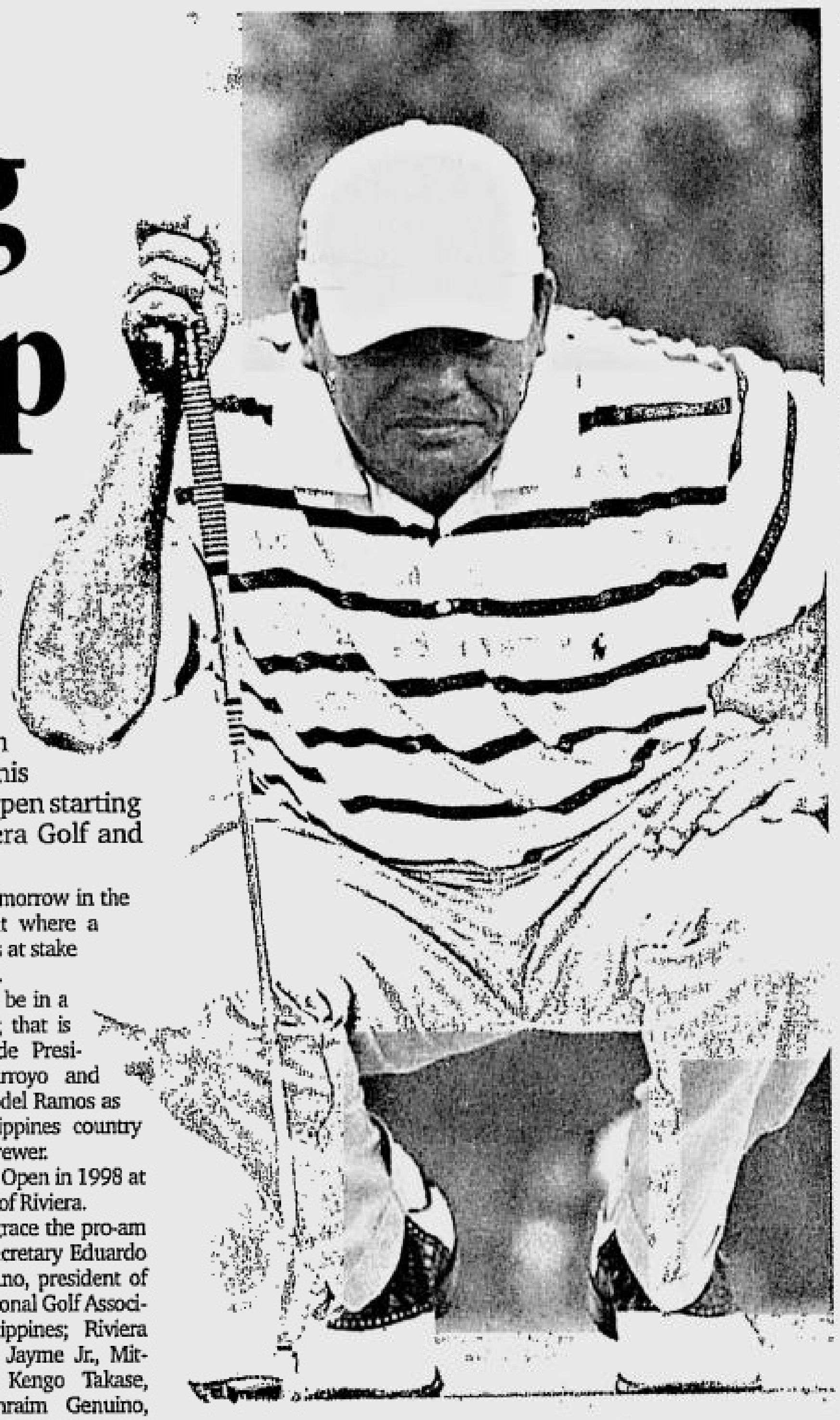
Manila-based defending champion Rick Gibson of Canada and local star Frankie Miñoza, meanwhile, head a field of 160 players from 18 countries battling for the winner's purse of about $25,000.

Miñoza, who just signed an endorsement deal with Callaway, and the other name players in the field strut their wares tomorrow in the pro-am tournament where a Mitsubishi Lancer is at stake as hole-in-one prize.

Miñoza, 44, will be in a high-profile pairing that is expected to include President Macapagal-Arroyo and former president Fidel Ramos as well as DHL Philippines country manager Charles Brewer.

Miñoza won the Open in 1998 at the Couples course of Riviera.

VIPs invited to grace the pro-am include Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines; Riviera board chair Cesar Jayme Jr., Mitsubishi president Kengo Takase, Pagcor chair Ephraim Genuino, Ubix's Bert Bravo and Ira Maniquiz of San Miguel.


FORMER champ Miñoza heads the homegrown challenge. PDI PHOTO

Rich Country Club Invitational draws cream of RP pros

THE BIGGEST, most lucrative local golf tournament outside the Philippine Open fires off on March 18-21 at the sumptuous The Country Club in Canlubang, Laguna, with the cream of the country's pros vying for plum prizes.

For the second straight year, the Razon family will hold the P3.85 million The Country Club Invitational golf tournament in honor of the family's late patriarch, Don Pocholo Razon.

The lion's purse of P1.1 million will go to the winner of what has become one the country's major championships.

Inspired by its successful staging last year, sponsors have raised last year's cash pot by 10 percent.

"The tournament was launched last year by Enrique K. Razon Jr. to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo, an avid golfer like him," said Vince Villafuerte, president of the organizing Videocom.

Defending champion Cassius Casas is the hot favorite to make a killing again in the tournament. The dusky Davaoeño won by four strokes last year over Benjie Magada and Antonio Lascuña.

Looming as his chief rivals, however, are the two top Filipino pros, Gerald Rosales and Frankie Miñoza, who finished 11th last year.

An 18-hole pro-am tournament on March 17 will precede the event, with some of the country's golfing executives and the hosts' invitees expected to see action.

Villafuerte said the top 21 finishers in last year's inaugurals have been given automatic slots, with the rest of the 44-player field to be tapped by the sponsors, headed by the younger Razon.

Aside from Casas, Magada, Lascuña, Rosales and Miñoza, others seeded into the event are Richard Sinfuego, Mars Pucay, Gerald Rosales, Ruben Sasutil, Cookie La'O, Rey Pagunsan, Robert Pactolerin, Angelo Que, Elmer Salvador, Ruben Sasutil, Cesar Ababa, Dan Cruz, Danny Zarate, Ramil Bisera, Rodrigo Cuello, Eddie Bagtas, Ronald Pactolerin and Rey Alit.

The country's top four amateurs have been invited to play.

Fireworks seen over RP SEAG choices

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES' choices of sports to be calendared for the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games will be the hottest topic of discussion when the 11 member-countries hold their preliminary SEAG Federation caucus here next week.

At least 37 sports leaders from SEAG nations are scheduled to participate in the deliberations.

The Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) will present the 22 priority sports to the federation, which will then recommend at least eight more events to complete the 2005 calendar.

POC president and federation chair Celso Dayrit will preside over the two-day meeting slated March 4-5 at the PICC conference hall.

The Philippine Sports Commission didn't get any invitation to the initial SEAG deliberations. The PSC is at the forefront of the government side of the preparations for the 2005 Games.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said he wasn't invited to the meeting but stressed that the agency will be ready to help.

"Ours is a proposal to Philsoc (Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee) showing that the government is ready to help," he said.

The POC explained that the initial meeting will be an internal affair, although the PSC will be involved in the later conventions.

The PSC earlier came out with proposed venues for 40 sports or so. The POC, however, has not received the list from the PSC.

Aside from the composition of sports events, the two-day federation meeting will tackle women in sports and sports science and medicine, as well as rules in sports.

Choose your wild

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THERE are basically three kinds of athletes. First, the confident. Second, the coward. Third, the showboat.

The confident is the one who can, almost always, do it.

The coward is the one who, most of the time, can't do it.

The showboat is the one who thinks he can do it all the time.

Muhammad Ali is the best example of a confident athlete. In his time, Ali always fought confident. Each time he fought, he never thought of losing.

So confident was Ali that in virtually all of his fights, he'd say which round he'd win—and next proceed to fulfill his promise. There is no other athlete—past and present—who did what Ali did. Too bad he didn't turn into a politician; he would have fulfilled promises he'd made during campaign sorties.

Considered the best boxer of all-time, Ali always won the fights that mattered.

Oh, yes, he had a few losses. Against Joe Frazier in 1971, Ken Norton in 1973, Leon Spinks in 1978, Larry Holmes in 1980 and Trevor Berbick in 1981. I'm sure those were the five that beat Ali. But Ali made up for those losses by winning all the most important fights of his career, including that one against Frazier in the Thrilla in Manila on Oct. 1, 1975; that fight was considered the best fight of the last century. Include, too, Ali's stunning eighth-round knockout of the hitherto unbeaten George Foreman in Kinshasha, Zaire, in September of 1974.

Ali also avenged his defeat to Spinks, but not to Holmes, his former sparring partner. Ali had been too old for a rematch against a much younger Holmes, so that not long after that humiliation, the Louisville Lip retired.

Ali's retirement ended an era; boxing's popularity would soon suffer a terrible downswing. But that's another story.

The coward is the kind of athlete that actually owns enough skills and talent to succeed but doubts his abilities to translate these into victory. Also, he thinks his tools for success are not yet that sharp, that is why he suffers from inferiority complex during his baptism of fire.

In this, Ali comes to mind again.

Ali was barely 20 years old when he dethroned the unbeaten, fearsome and almost indestructible Sonny Liston in 1963 for the world heavyweight crown. Thinking Ali's win was a fluke, a rematch was staged in no time. Confident as ever, Ali would knock Liston out in the first round.

Cowardice was never in Ali's vocabulary because he was confident of his abilities from the day he decided he'd become a boxer.

Now the showboat.

This is the kind that camouflages his inadequacy with theatrics, if not clowning antics. He can fake us at the start but, just like all fakes, he'd soon be unmasked. In no time, he'd fade into obscurity. Unlike the coward, the showboat has no chance at stardom because, unlike the coward, he lacks the skills and talent to hit the big-time.

I've seen all three in the flesh. And the one I admire most, of course, is Mr. Confident.

At times, one lacking in talent but oozing with confidence is much better than the one with a wealth of skills but with a dearth of balls "down there." Confidence, unlike cowardice, is partial to success.

We can add Mr. Attitude to the list. This is the one who thinks he is even better than the coach. This is the most dangerous as he can destroy a team, if not the future of a rookie coach.

A coach can also be your Mr. Attitude. He thinks he is even better than the chairman/president/CEO, if not the entire organization.

The politically correct attitude toward Mr. Attitude?

Dump him the minute you see him.

He is worse than a termite.

***

FASTBREAK. Tomorrow's Celebrity Pro-Am of the DHL 88th Philippine Open at Riviera's Langer will give President Macapagal-Arroyo a well-deserved breather from her hectic campaign for the May presidential polls. It is hoped that she joins the tournament that stakes the new model of the Mitsubishi Lancer on No. 4 and a BMG Solar water heater on Nov. 17 as hole-in-one prizes. If the President scores an ace, will she waive her prize? *Abangan*!…I will miss the performance of John Lesaca and Cash Manalang, who will dish it out tonight at Dish in Rockwell's Power Plant, Makati City. Catch you later, guys. If it's not asking too much, please play Rocky Raccoon for me tonight? Thanks.

SPORTSWATCH

Tagaytay hosts Dubai Cup chessfest

THE ASIAN Cities Chess Team Championship for the Dubai Cup slated March 20- 28 will be hosted by Tagaytay City at its new International Convention Center. Tagaytay City Mayor Francis N. Tolentino agreed to host the event which is in need of sponsorship. Tolentino also agreed to offer training for all four Philippine teams, namely, Tagaytay, Mandaluyong, Pasay and Tanauan. Thirty-five teams from 25 countries have confirmed participation in the Asian cities. "We have requested financial support from the Department of Tourism and the Philippine Sports Commission," National Chess Federation of the Philippines executive director Casto Abundo said.

Pinoy pugs victim of spotty officiating

MINDANAO-BASED boxers Philip Parcon and Federico Catubay were victims of hometown decisions in their crack for the World Boxing Council (WBC) youth title fights in Bangkok, Thailand, over the weekend. Parcon hurt minimumweight champion Olehdong Krathingdaeng Gym (Sithsamuechai) several times only to lose via unanimous decision over 10 rounds. It was the same story in Catubay's spirited challenge against lightflyweight titlist Salikalek Krathingdaeng Gym (Ekarin), who won by split decision. *Rey Dansaco, contributor*

Hermie, Monico PSA Forum guests

THE WEEKLY PSA Forum will have Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella for its main guest tomorrow at the Manila Pavilion. Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi) president Nic Jorge and horseowner Hermie Esguerra will join Puentevella in the public sports program sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa Colors. Aired live over dzSR Sports Radio, the session begins at 10:30 a.m.

Darts officers' oath-taking tonight

THE NEW set of officers of the Darts Council of the Philippines will be sworn in tonight in simple rites set at the Amber's Restaurant in Makati. The oath-taking ceremonies will start at 6 p.m. Errol Magtubo is the new president of the DCP. The other officers are vice president (internal) Louie de Jesus, vice president (external) Alex Reyes, treasuer Amante Santos, secretary Steve Dorotheo, auditor Ronnel Botor, director for Ways and Means Frida Morelos, director for youth development Logie Estacio, and directors Mon Sabalboro, Andee Arrieta and Larry Memije.

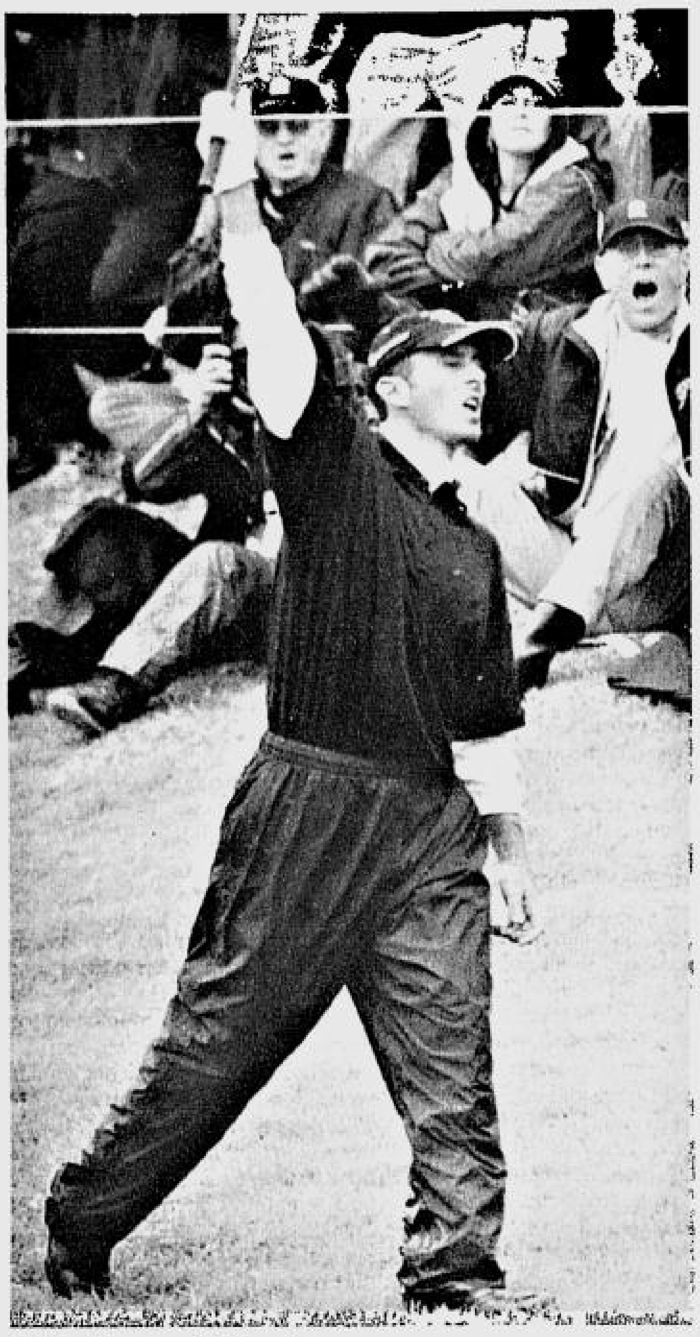
Battle of the Heavyweights derby

THE "BATTLE of the Heavyweights 7-Cock Derby" will be held on March 6 at the Las Coliseum, according to *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio. Entry fee is P330,000. Seeing action are the Sagupaan Dream Team of Antonio, lawyer Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and William Co, Mayor Jessie Viceo, Sonny Lagon, businessman Gerry Ramos, Gov. Ito Ynares and former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, Joey de los Santos, Alfie Sy, Eric de la Rosa of Pasay, Benjie Lim, Boy Royo, Pol Estrellado, Ric de Guzman, sportsman Matt Bitanga and Dicky Lim.

Roligon stages Blue Ridge 4-cocker

THE "BLUE Ridge 4-Cock Derby" starts at 7 tonight at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Rey Oliveros of Rizal, team leader of Ucap and NCA's stag screening committee, will host the derby. Among the participants are sportsman Raymond Velayo, Sonny Lagon and Patrick Antonio. For inquiries, contact 833-2275, 833-1638, 852-9812 and 852-9774.

FOOTBALL CHAMPS
Members of the Ateneo Grade School-Quezon City team which won the National Capital Region Under-13 football tournament pose with their coaches Jong Castañeda, Randy Jalbuena and Joy del Valle.



WEIR celebrates with the gallery. REUTERS

REPEAT WINNER

Weir survives scare, nips Maruyama by 1

LOS ANGELES—Mike Weir staved off a late charge by Shigeki Maruyama, nearly holing out a chip from the grassy hill above the 18th green at Riviera to save par for a one-shot victory, making him the first repeat winner of the Nissan Open in nine years.

"That's a good way to end it," Weir said Sunday.

He closed with an even-par 71, avoiding a playoff only when Maruyama's 12-foot par putt slid by on the right side.

The Canadian became the sixth repeat champion at Riviera, finishing at 17-under 267.

He could have done without the drama.

Weir was seven shots clear of Maruyama when he chipped in for birdie on No. 3, and still had a five-shot lead when he made the turn. But a two-shot swing on the 10th—a bogey by Weir, a birdie by Maruyama—changed everything.

Maruyama finally caught Weir with birdies on the 15th and 16th, and a steady rain only added to the pressure.

Maruyama hit into the rough on the 18th and couldn't reach the green. Weir missed to the right, leaving himself a delicate chip with not much green in front of the flag. The chip was perfect, and caught the right edge of the cup.

Weir won $864,000 for his seventh career victory. It was the first time in six tries he had won on the PGA Tour when leading going into the final round.

Maruyama, who has a membership at Riviera, closed with a 67. Stuart Appleby (66) was another two shots back.

John Daly, coming off his first PGA Tour victory in nine years, made six birdies on his final 12 holes for a 67 and finished fourth. He only had two top 10s all of last year, and this will allow him to climb even higher in the world ranking as he tries to get into the Masters.

Tiger Woods is now 0-for-6 at Riviera,. the only PGA Tour course he has played so often without winning. For the second straight year, he saved his best round for when it didn't matter—a career-best 64 at Riviera that moved him up 37 spots into a tie for seventh. *AP*

Yao's the man as Rockets win in 3 overtimes

HOUSTON—Yao Ming made the Atlanta Hawks pay for their physical play.

Yao scored a career-high 41 points, including eight in the last of three overtimes, to help the Houston Rockets beat the Hawks, 123-121, on Sunday night in the NBA's longest game since 2000-01.

Atlanta centers Joel Przybilla and Zeljko Rebraca both fouled out trying to stop the 7-foot-6 Chinese center.

"They were using a lot of strategy against me that I didn't really like," Yao said. "They were doing a lot of hitting. I didn't like the way they were playing me."

Though he played 50 minutes, Yao didn't look tired in the third overtime as he scored six points in the first two minutes.

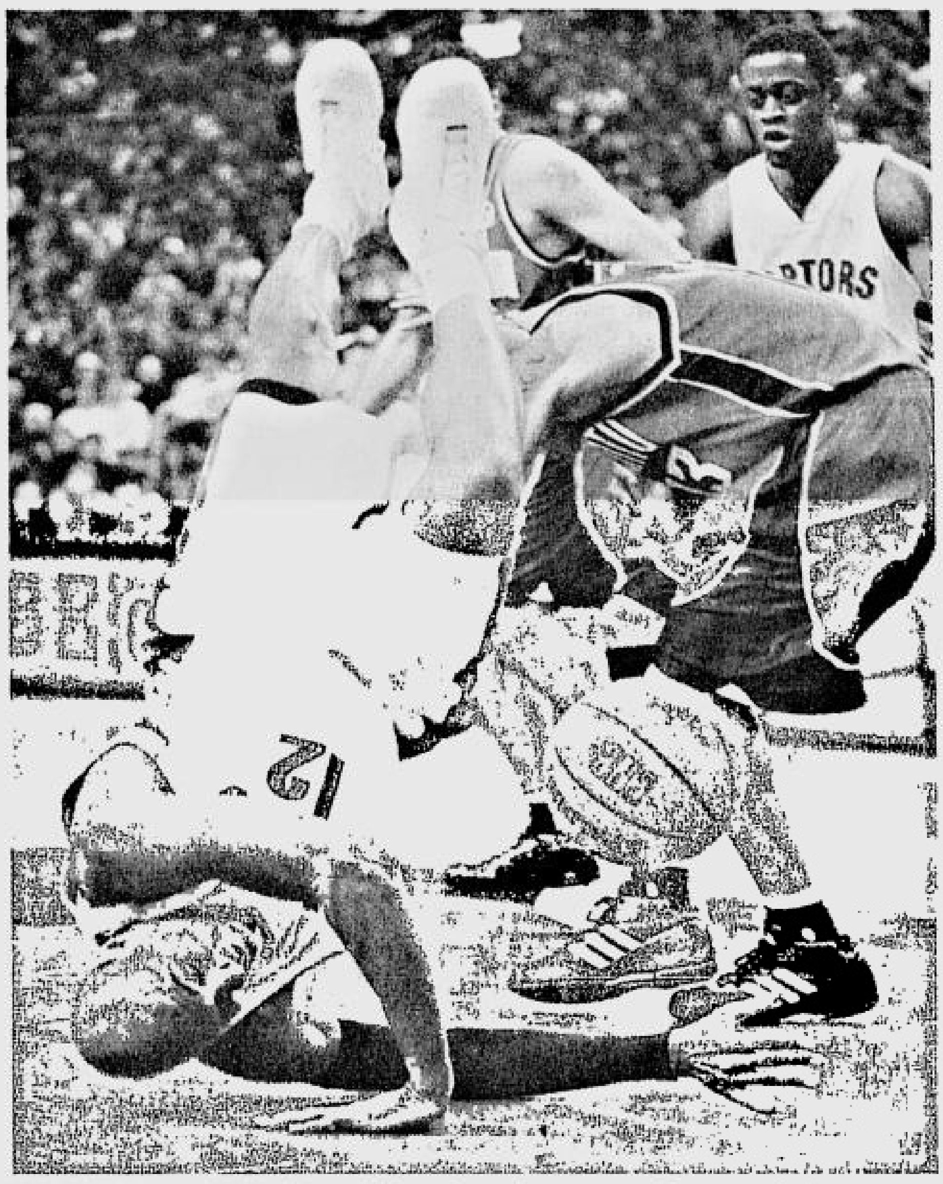
Yao was 15-of-21 from the field, 11-of-13 from the line, and had 16 rebounds and seven assists.

In New York, LeBron James scored 22 points in his first game at Madison Square Garden, where the fans turned on the home team as the New York Knicks fell behind by 23 points in the fourth quarter of a 92-86 loss.

In Minneapolis, Tony Parker had 26 points, and Tim Duncan made seven of eight free throws in the fourth quarter to finish with 25 points and help the San Antonio Spurs beat the first-place Minnesota Timberwolves, 94-92.

In Phoenix, Kobe Bryant scored 16 of his 40 points in the fourth quarter, as the Los Angeles Lakers ripped the Phoenix Suns, 104-92, and tallied their first four-game winning streak since December. *AP*

Complete results: Cleveland 92, New York 86; Sacramento 96, Toronto 81; Indiana 94, Utah 80; San Antonio 94, Minnesota 92; Milwaukee 113, Washington 85; Orlando 87, Detroit 86; LA Lakers 104, Phoenix 92; Houston 123, Atlanta 121 (3OT); Seattle 108, Boston 87.



TORONTO forward Michael Curry (12) crashes to the court over Sacramento's Doug Christie (hidden) during their game Sunday. Toronto's Jerome Moiso looks on. REUTERS

PAL Interclub gets major boost again

THIS year's staging of the Philippine Airlines Interclub golf tournament got another major boost when 11 major sponsors expressed their full support to the annual affair.

They are the ABS-CBN Global, Airbus, Asus Notebook PC, CNN International, GE Aircraft Engines, Golden Nugget Hotel Las Vegas, Johnnie Walker, Manila Broadcasting Corp., Radio Mindanao Network, Royal Caribbean International and UMBN.

The lucky player from the 568 golfers in the 18th Seniors Interclub and another from the field of 760 in the 57th edition of the regular event will win the grand raffle prize worth $12,000 (about P685,000) each.

Others backing the golfest are PLDT, Joey 92.3, 96.3 WRock, 105.1 Crossover, Asia Brewery, Boeing, Boysen Pacific Paint, Century Park Hotel, Inq7.net, Jam 88.3, Tanduay Rhum and www.philstar.com.

"On behalf of PAL, I would like to welcome all the participants from all over the world," said Interclub chair Domingo T. Duerme Jr., PAL senior assistant vice president for Mindanao.

Hosting both events are the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club in Cagayan de Oro and Del Monte Golf Club in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon.

The seniors event will be played from Feb. 27 to 29. After a two-day break, the regular event comes off the wraps on March 3.

WILLIAMS (23) dunks over Maryland's Nik Camer-Medley. AP

Devils whip Terps, check 2-game skid

DURHAM, North Carolina—Duke's dominating defense is back.

J.J. Redick scored 20 points and the third-ranked Blue Devils ended a two-game losing streak by beating Maryland, 86-63, on Sunday.

Shelden Williams had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Blue Devils (22-3, 11-2 Atlantic Coast Conference), who avoided their first three-game losing streak in eight seasons. Duke has won 40 straight games at Cameron Indoor Stadium.

Duke had won 18 straight games and reached No. 1 for the seventh consecutive season before last week's 78-74 loss at North Carolina State. The Blue Devils followed that with a 90-84 loss at Wake Forest on Wednesday, losing consecutive games for just the third time in eight seasons.

But the Blue Devils ended that skid by overwhelming the Terrapins (13-10, 4-8), using their pressure defense to fuel a bevy of transition scores. Duke held Maryland to 37 percent shooting, and scored 31 points off 23 turnovers. The Blue Devils had 16 steals and blocked five shots.

Duke shot 50 percent, including 9-of-23 from 3-point range.

"I don't think there was pressure on us," said Redick, who went 5-for-9 from beyond the arc. "Obviously this was a game that we really needed to win. But it was more just about us. We needed to make a statement today, that Duke is going to be here for the long run." *AP*

Hot tennis couple scores on same day

HEWITT

CLIJSTERS

BRUSSELS, Belgium—For Kim and Lleyton, it was another day of "Anything you can do, I can do better." And they have a whole season ahead of them for a repeat performance.

Only one hour after Kim Clijsters won the Diamond Games tournament on home soil in Antwerp, her fiancee Lleyton Hewitt added the ABN Amro title in nearby Rotterdam, Netherlands. By nightfall the hottest couple in tennis was celebrating together in Clijsters' hometown of Bree.

Last year, before their official engagement, they already won the Indian Wells titles on the same day.

On Sunday, Clijsters flashed her diamond engagement ring which went perfectly with the Antwerp trophy racket which has 1,702 diamonds encrusted in four kilograms of gold.

Unlike Hewitt, Clijsters had an easy match.

She beat Italian veteran Silvia Farina Elia, 6-3, 6-0, in the final on Sunday to clinch her second title in as many weeks. It was her 21st overall—to go with her upcoming 21st birthday, she said.

Hewitt, who still has a lot to do to recapture his No. 1 ranking, was seeded only sixth in Rotterdam, but made it seem like a mistake with a spirited performance, beating world No. 2 Juan Carlos Ferrero, 6-7 (1), 7-5, 6-4. *AP*

I'll remember . . .

From page A17

the system. But personally, I think I'm doing well in practice," said Alvarez.

"Maybe he thinks I'm not ready yet. However, I believe in coach and in whatever he has in store for me. I will just continue to work hard."

Alvarez had brought in an entourage—family members, relatives, friends—who chanted his name on two separate occasions only to be denied by Moran.

"I gave away at least 20 tickets for this game. But it's OK, I have a long way to go," said Alvarez.

His father, Rudy, a former college ball player at Far Eastern University and San Sebastian College, sympathized with him, citing the need for Rich to jell with the team.

"I understand Moran's decision. But if Moran doesn't let Rich play in the next game, it will be unacceptable," said the elder Alvarez.

Landis, not Lance, rules Tour

LANDIS

MALHAO, Portugal—Floyd Landis won the final stage to take the Tour of the Algarve on Sunday, while overnight leader and US Postal Service teammate Lance Armstrong finished fifth overall.

Another US Postal rider, Victor Hugo Pena, was second in the sprint finish of the fifth stage, and Portugal's Candido Barbosa, riding for LA Pecol, was third in the stage and overall in the European event.

Armstrong came 34th in the stage, part of his buildup for his attempt at a sixth straight triumph in the Tour de France this year. He'd previously said he was aiming to test his form in southern Portugal, and wasn't out to win the event.

Armstrong and Landis were separated by one second in the overall classification going into the final stage.

"We have a strong team," Landis said. "Lance is generous, so he said I could go for the win if I was feeling well. Everybody worked together.

"It's good for the team to start the year with a win, so everybody's happy."

The eight-man US Postal Service team featured four new riders hired for this season—Jose Azevedo, Patrick McCarty, Daniel Rincon, and Benjamin Noval.

The riders battled stormy weather on the 178.5-kilometer (110-mile) stage, which included three climbs of around 500 meters (1,650 feet).

"Today the weather was a little strange. It was pretty miserable at the beginning but it got better towards the end," Landis said.

Landis finished the stage in 4 hours, 40 minutes, 18 seconds. Pena and two other riders were five seconds behind. Armstrong was 1 minute, 2 seconds off the lead. *AP*

Pinoy wins music mixing search

IAN Magbanua bested finalists from South Africa, China, Singapore, India, Indonesia, Taiwan and Thailand to win the Philips BeDJ MixMaster World Search held recently at Dockside in Cape Town, South Africa.

The competition is a collaboration between the consumer electronics company and the Ministry of Sound (MoS). The contest challenged budding DJs to employ their mixing creativity by producing their own music tracks using the Philips 530 BeDJ phone, the world's first mobile phone dedicated to music creation.

"It feels great to win," said Magbanua. "Winning is such an overwhelming experience. To be acknowledged by world-renowned DJs just blows me away. This victory is a milestone because it strengthened my belief in my capabilities. This win is also a victory for our country because it shows how well we can battle it out with everybody else in international competition."

Magbanua can now look forward to bright prospects in the DJ scene as his winning entry will be remixed and released on the prestigious MoS white label and distributed to the world's top DJ and mixing circles.

All entries were created using the Philips 530 BeDJ phone.

Alternately delightful and shocking

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"AMERICAN Idol" started the "talent search" fad worldwide, but it's only now that viewers here are getting to watch the show (on Star World, Tuesdays and Thursday at 8 p.m.). And they are alternately delighted and shocked by what they see and hear.

The delightful aspect is the fact that the program makes it possible for total unknowns to get a crack at singing stardom. If they sing better than most, the program's panel of three judges votes them in, no questions asked.

On the other hand, if they can't carry a tune, not all of the influence-peddling in the world can get them to the next semifinalist level.

This is where the show's "shock value" enters the picture, because the judges, especially the program's resident "ogre," **Simon Cowell**, are infamous for not mincing words in telling the bad singers exactly how execrable they are.

Some viewers here are shocked by such painful honesty, but it's par for the course in US show biz, so most contestants take the judges' insults without committing suicide—or murder.

Once in a rare while, though, rejected contestants get so ticked off that they challenge the judges' musical norms. Recently, a really infuriated youth even hurled a cup full of water at Sarcastic Simon, before he was grabbed by security guards.

Sad to say, that didn't scare the judges into toning down their sarcasm in succeeding episodes, as these spicy quotes from a recent telecast resoundingly prove:

"I'm glad you finally stopped singing, because you are truthfully, absolutely horrible!"

"You were absolutely, 100-percent dreadful!"

"You look like a pen salesman. —And you have the personality of a mouse!"

"You're only not good enough, you're one of the worst singers I've heard. You're not *meant* to be a singer!"

"It doesn't get much worse than that!"

"You've managed to do the impossible—make a great song sound really lousy!"

"You really need a competition like this because you're so mediocre that you wouldn't get anywhere, otherwise. And, even with this show, your future is still pretty dark!"

"If you sang like that in a karaoke bar, they'd turn the power off!

—Ouch, that really hurt!

But the judges had to be strict because they could choose only a limited number of semifinalists who would be invited for the next round of auditions in Hollywood.

Last Tuesday, it was announced that only 117 semifinalists were chosen out of the thousands who had auditioned in different cities in the States. Of these 117, only 25 would "survive" to reach the final round.

Could some of them be Fil-Americans? One of the "survivors" in Hawaii was a young and lovely belter named **Camille Velasco**, and she blew the judges away. Let's hope she ends up in the final 25!

Living Asia Channel launch

THE PHILIPPINE launch of Living Asia Channel will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Feb. 25 at the Main Lobby of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The first Philippine-made Asian travel and lifestyle channel on Globecast World TV in North America is also available in Asia via Mabuhay Satellite's Agilla II, and in the Philippines through Home Cable 42, Destiny Cable 49 and Dream 16.

Scriptwriting seminar

VINE Communications Inc. has slated a scriptwriting seminar from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Feb. 28 at 19 Hidalgo St., San Lorenzo Village (842-6665).

The seminar will be conducted by **Nenette Pacoli**, regional director of Good News (Philippines) Inc. and producer-writer of the TV documentary series "wwjd.com.ph," two episodes of which have won international awards.

'Duplex'

DANNY DeVito directs the comedy "Duplex" starring **Ben Stiller** and **Drew Barrymore.** They play Alex and Nancy, a married couple bent on buying a duplex. However, it has a rent-controlled tenant, an old woman named Mrs. Connelly.

They presume that frail Mrs. Connelly won't be much of an inconvenience, and the arrangement should be a temporary one anyway, so they finalize the deal. Unfortunately, the old woman isn't as frail and saintly as they thought!

Dreaming of Mraz

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I AM still in a daze after watching **Jason Mraz** with my daughter, **Bianchi**, and sister, **Clara**, at Dish in Rockwell. Destiny made the three of us relatives, but it's music that made us friends. The best bonding moments we've had were mostly spent watching our favorite artists. We all went gaga over Jason's drop-dead gorgeous looks and sexy voice! It seemed like he was having foreplay with his guitar, then making love to the microphone.

Jason's moves were boyishly sexy. He has no pretensions. He blurts out what's on his mind, like the woozy effect Red Bull has on him.

"You really make it strong around here," he said after drinking Red Bull. "I took a nap, but after I took Red Bull, my hands started shaking and I began to see things!"

Impromptu lyrics

The Hugh Grant dead ringer has no qualms about stretching his arms and rotating his head to relax in between songs. This only goes to show how comfy he is with his audience. It's as if he personally invited you to jam with him in his living room. That's how cozy it was at Dish on the night Jason performed.

Another amazing thing about Jason is his ability to come up with impromptu lyrics and a melody to serenade a certain girl he fancies from the audience. He also has a knack for interspersing lines from songs of other artists (such as **Lionel Richie**'s "Stuck On You" and Madness' "Our House") into his own hits.

Being a newbie in the limelight, Mraz has already impressed critics and fans, a feat that is usually a prerequisite for legends. It's not about just singing a catchy song, although Mraz has plenty, like "The Remedy," "You and I Both" and "Sleep All Day." It's also about the execution. Mraz executes songs so perfectly and apparently takes pride in crafting a song that needs no digital or synthesized enhancement to cover some flaws. This might be hard to believe, especially if you have not heard Jason perform live.

True artist

Dish's **Philip Cu-unjieng** says, "What a welcome change to have a true contemporary artist like Jason and not just some revival act!"

Mraz's latest hit, "Curbside Prophet," remains true to his artistry. It's a composition that sets itself apart and can perhaps be regarded as his "Mona Lisa" or Sistine Chapel. "Curbside Prophet" speaks a lot about Mraz's music, which is the song of the streets and the vision of great musical artistry. His soul-charged compositions are definitely his claim to fame.

Jason makes scathing and yodeling seem so effortless. He says, "Without my scathing, my songs would probably just last two minutes! Scathing is my way to release tension or just pass the time away!"

Ultimate giveaway

Everybody fell in love with Jason instantly, begging him to throw anything he owned to the crowd. He first threw his little guitar gadgets, then his empty bottle of Evian. But his ultimate giveaway was his favorite pair of sneakers, which he threw to a guy in the audience, who wore the same size of shoes (8). He even teased the guy, saying, "I got small feet but that doesn't mean anything!"

DREAMING/ A22

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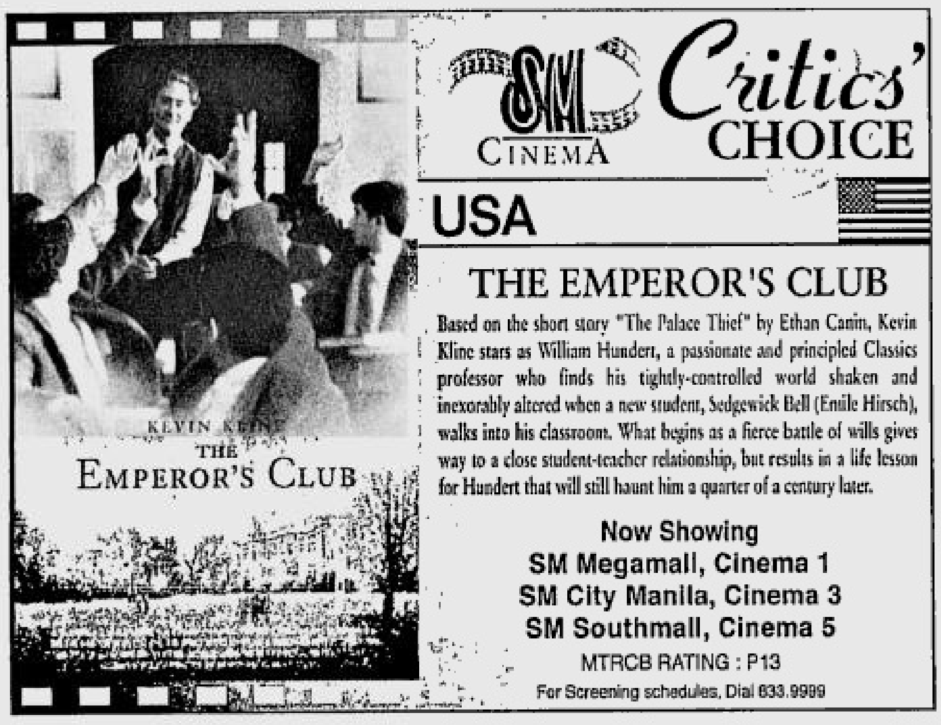
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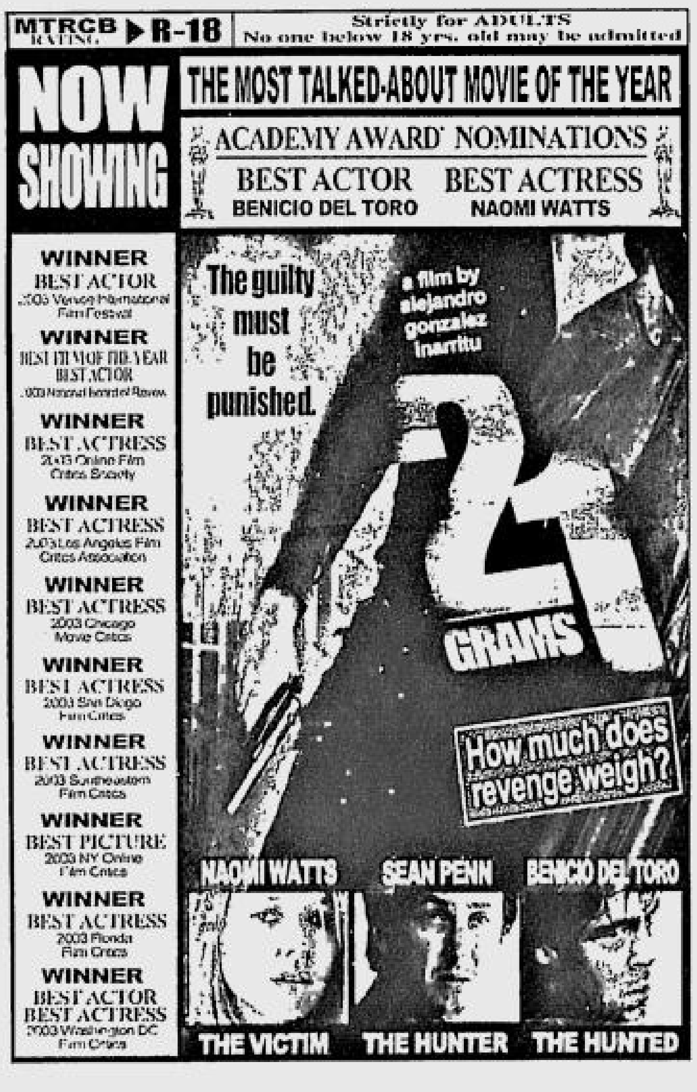
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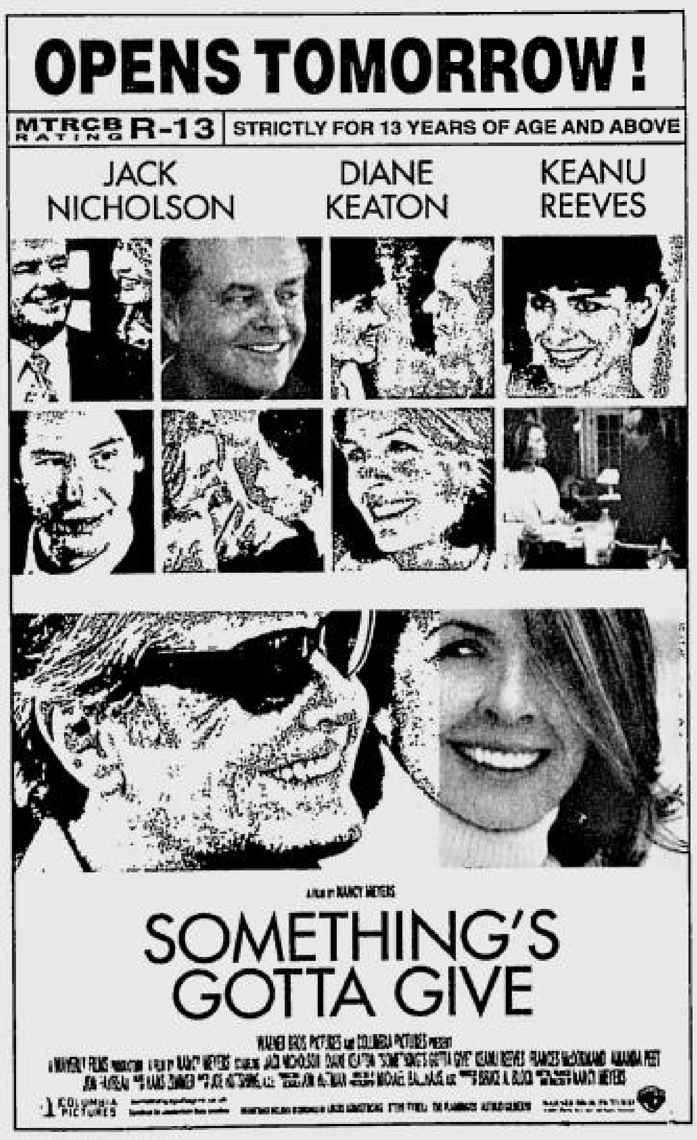
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Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KUYA
Ali 2	MILAN
Ali 3	RUNAWAY JURY
Ali 4	COLD MOUNTAIN
Ali 5	HAUNTED MANSION
Ali 6	HAUNTED OFFICE
Ali 7	CHASING LIBERTY

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MAR 6	BB. PILIPINAS CORONATION NIGHT
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MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	FRIDA / BAHID
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	MILAN
B	BURLESK KING
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MILAN
CINEMA-2	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-3	WISHING STAIRS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MASTER AND COMMANDER (RI)
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TALE OF TWO SISTERS
CINEMA-6	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
CINEMA-7	MAGIC KITCHEN
CINEMA-8	GUSTO KO SA LALAKI (RI)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RUNAWAY JURY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HAUNTED MANSION
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	COLD MOUNTAIN
CINEMA-12	CHASING LIBERTY
CINEMA-14	KUYA
CINEMA-15	MILAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	MILAN
CINEMA-1	MONA LISA SMILE
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-4	CLOSED
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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1	MILAN	11:45, 2:15, 4:45 7:15, 9:45	PG-13
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	11:00, 2:00, 5:00 8:00, 11:00	R-18
3	RUNAWAY JURY	11:30, 2:20, 5:10 8:00, 10:50	R-13
4	HAUNTED MANSION	11:30, 1:30, 3:30 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	GP

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MILAN PG13 11:50, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	21 GRAMS R18 1:35, 4:15, 6:55, 9:35	TOTALLY BLONDE R13 1:10, 3:20

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2	MILAN	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:20, 1:15, 4:10, 7:05, 10:00
4	WISHING STAIRS	12:05, 2:15, 4:35, 6:35, 9:00
5	CRUNAWAY JURY	10:10, 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
6	21 GRAMS	11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:40, 9:00
7	BONE SNATCHER	11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
8	CHASING LIBERTY	12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
9	KUYA	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
10	TOTALLY BLONDE	12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 9:00

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ERMITA 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	MILAN	11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:10, 1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:50
3	KUYA	10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
4	WISHING STAIRS	10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:50
5	RUNAWAY JURY	11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:00
6	HAUNTED MANSION	10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:50
7	CHASING LIBERTY	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

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Cinema	Movie	Times
1	HAUNTED MANSION	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	11:10, 2:25, 5:40, 9:00
3	KUYA	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
4	CHASING LIBERTY	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
5	RUNAWAY JURY	10:20, 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
6	MASTER AND COMMANDER/ MYSTIC RIVER	11:30, 2:10, 4:15, 6:55, 9:00
7	MILAN	10:15, 12:55, 3:35, 6:15, 9:00
8	WISHING STAIRS	11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	HAUNTED MANSION	11:00, 12:50, 2:45, 4:40, 6:35, 8:30
2	CHASING LIBERTY	11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40
3	KUYA	10:35, 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 8:50
4	WISHING STAIRS	10:40, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:10
5	MILAN	10:30, 12:35, 3:20, 6:05, 8:50
6	RUNAWAY JURY	10:10, 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
7	COLD MOUNTAIN	10:10, 11:40, 2:30, 5:20, 8:30
8	MASTER COMMANDER / MYSTIC RIVER	11:45, 2:40, 5:20, 8:30

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	KUYA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	KUYA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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1	MILAN
2	WISHING STAIRS
3	KUYA
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5	COLD MOUNTAIN

Big R Supercenter LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870

1	MILAN
2	THE TWINS EFFECT
3	HAUNTED OFFICE
4	CHASING LIBERTY
5	MONA LISA SMILE

Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS 852-2125

1	KUYA
2	MILAN
3	CHASING LIBERTY
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
5	THE HAUNTED MANSION

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS San Fernando Pampanga 875-1927 / 961-5270

1	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
2	WISHING STAIRS
3	MILAN
4	KUYA
5	HAUNTED MANSION
6 STANDARD	COLD MOUNTAIN

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858

1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	CHASING LIBERTY
3	KUYA
4 DTS	COLD MOUNTAIN
5	MILAN
6	WISHING STAIRS

BACOLOD 441-0458/59

1	MILAN
2	MONA LISA SMILE
3	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
4	DIABLO
5	UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN
6	HAUNTED OFFICE

ILOILO 336-8070/78

1	MONA LISA SMILE
2	KUYA
3	MILAN
4	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
5	DIABLO
6	THE GATHERING

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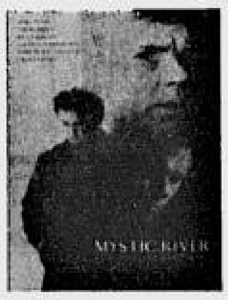

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Photo contest launched

AMONG book lovers, the joy of reading is one magical experience.

This is the subject of a photo contest that the National Book Development Board (NBDB) has launched to promote the love for books and reading.

The photo contest celebrates the pleasures of reading, a habit so endangered in this age of hip mobile technologies.

Open to all high school students with a camera, the contest is intended to encourage Filipinos of all ages and all walks of life to develop or revive the love for reading and for humanity's greatest storehouse of knowledge: books.

Ideal entries are candid photos (not posed) of people immersed in the pleasure of reading books, especially books authored by Filipinos.

Entries should be sent to the NBDB office on A. Ma. Regidor St., Area XI, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City 1101, on or before May 15.

Entry forms and full contest rules are available at the NBDB office. They may also be downloaded from its website, www.nbdb.gov.ph.

The contest culminates in June during the Philippine Book Development Month celebration.

Cash prizes and plaques await winners, whose works will be included in NBDB's 2005 calendar.

For details, interested parties may reach the book development board through (02)92-01829 or oed@nbdb.gov.ph.

Dreaming of Mraz

From page A20

The highlight of the night was meeting Jason backstage. He was genuinely warm and so unassuming, you couldn't help but be mesmerized by his charm. As Bianchi, Clara and I smiled all the way home, I silently wished to have Jason cloned. If he gave away his favorite pair of sneakers to a total stranger, he must be the type of guy who would take the shirt off his back and give it to his girl. Too bad, all I can do is sleep all day and continue dreaming.

For feedback e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com.

MRAZ

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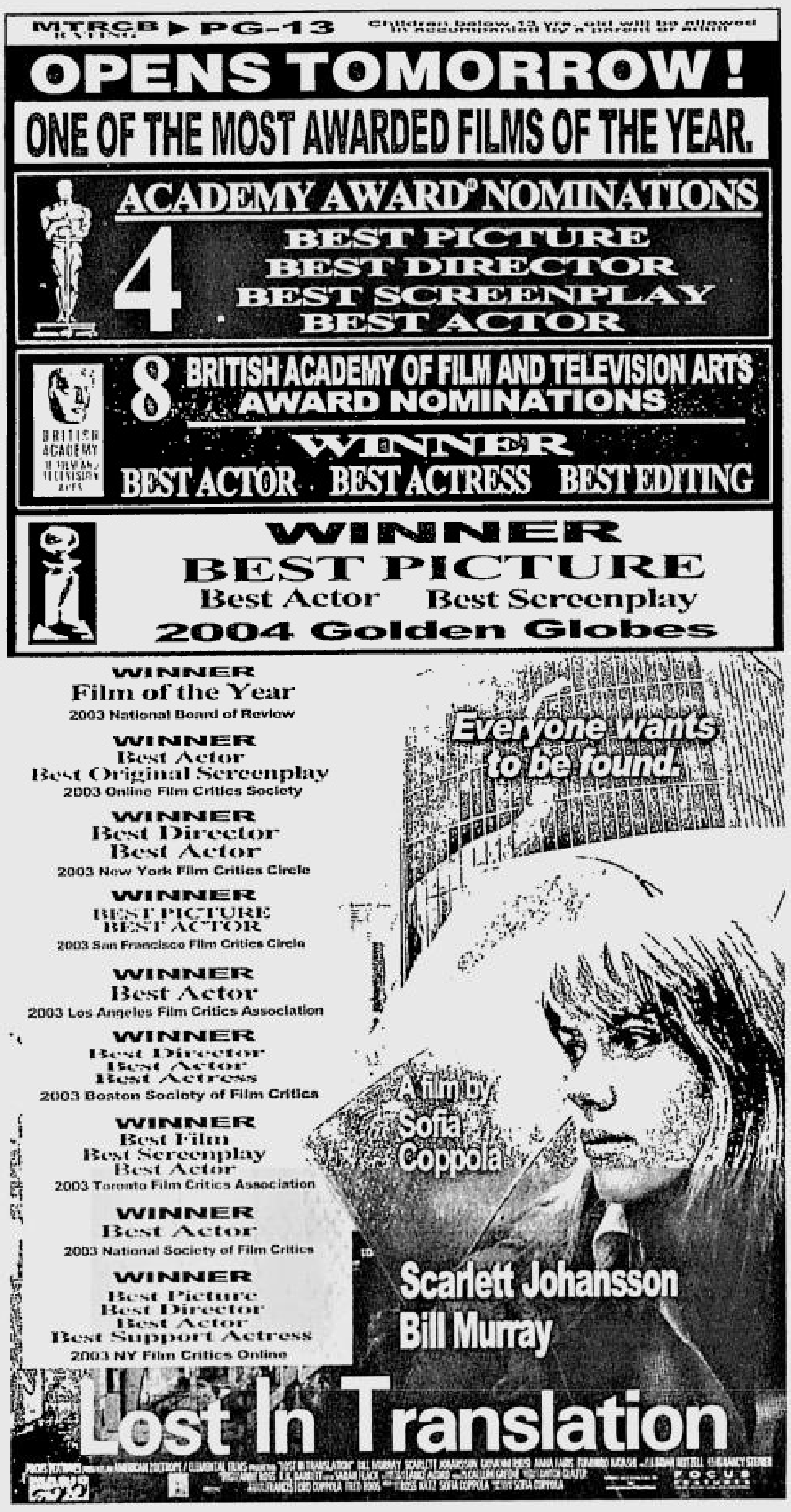
For details, call the Ad & Promo Department at 681-5401 local 118.



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WINNER
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Best Director
Best Actor
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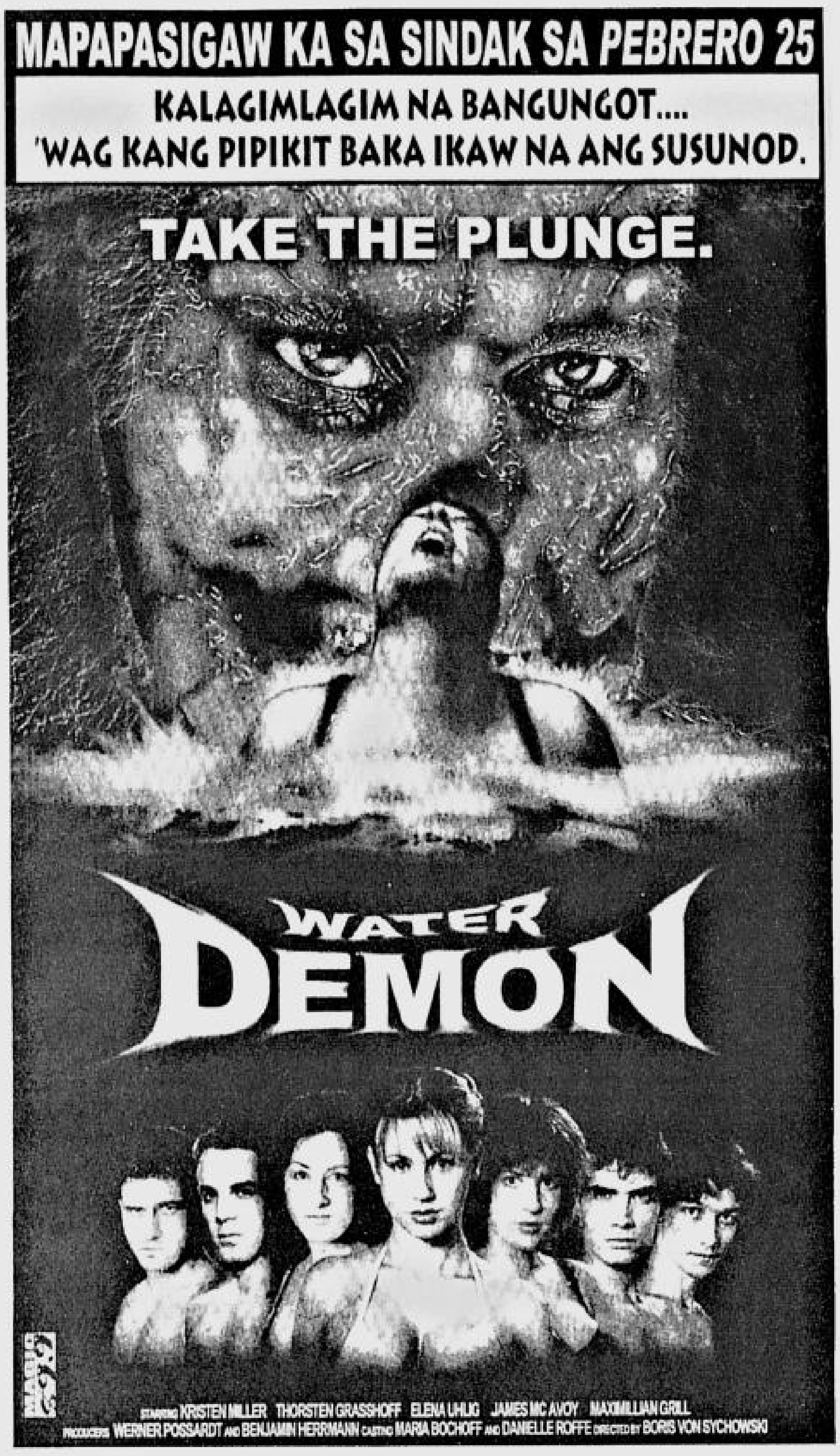
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BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
Djimon Hounsou
BEST SCREENPLAY
Jim Sheridan, Naomi Sheridan & Kirsten Sheridan

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

JACK NICHOLSON
DIANE KEATON
KEANU REEVES
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

OPENS FEBRUARY 25 AT
AYALA CINEMAS

Nicholson & Keaton: 'Something' else

Academy Award winners Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton star in a sparkling and sophisticated romantic comedy from acclaimed writer/director Nancy Meyers (What Women Want, Father of the Bride), which proves that in matters of the heart, sometimes you can teach an old playboy new tricks.

Harry Sanborn (Jack Nicholson) is a New York music mogul with a libido much younger than his years. He has the world on a string – and a string of beautiful young girlfriends to prove it. During a romantic rendezvous with his newest girlfriend, Marin at her mother's Hamptons beach house, Harry develops chest pains and eventually winds up being nursed by Marin's reluctant mother, Erica Barry (Diane Keaton) – a successful divorced New York playwright. In the process, Harry develops more heart pangs – the romantic kind – for Erica, a woman who is finally right for him in every way.

However, some habits die hard, and when Harry hesitates to pursue Erica, his charming thirty-something doctor (Keanu Reeves) becomes smitten with her. Harry undergoes a true change of heart when he fights to win Erica back.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

Depp scores an upset at Screen Actors' awards; Theron bound for Oscars

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Johnny Depp defied pundits' forecast when he won as best actor in the 10th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards held Sunday evening at the Los Angeles Shrine Exposition Center.

The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards is an important precursor of the Oscar awards, which is scheduled next Sunday, because most of its voting members belong to both groups. A majority of SAG's winners have gone on to win the Oscar acting derbies. The SAG awards also recognizes outstanding performances in television.

Upset

Johnny Depp's win for his mascara-wearing pirate in "Pirates of the Caribbean" was a major upset over "Mystic River's" Sean Penn, who was predicted to win. Another heavy favorite, Bill Murray ("Lost in Translation"), had defeated Depp in the best actor-comedy or musical category, at the recent Golden Globe Awards.

The triumph of Depp, who was the only best actor nominee not present, adds a suspenseful element to the coming Oscar race for best actor. Penn had been considered the actor to beat, with Murray as the dark horse. But Sunday night's actors' nod to Depp added a twist to the coming Academy best actor derby.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

No surprise

Renée Zellweger, who presented the best actor awards, accepted the trophy on behalf of Depp. She won one for herself, as best supporting actress for the Civil War drama, "Cold Mountain."

The best actress contest, in contrast, did not offer a surprise. Charlize Theron, who has already won the Golden Globe and the recent Berlin film festival awards for best actress for her gripping portrayal of a real-life serial killer in "Monster," added the SAG awards to her conquest.

The actress, who gained 30 pounds and wore dentures to portray Aileen Wuornos, gave special thanks to her mother, Gerda, with whom she has gone through a lot in life.

THERON: 30 pounds

In her speech, an emotional Theron cited Gerda as "my angel and my date tonight, my mom who put me on a plane with a one-way ticket to Hollywood when I was 19 years old. Thank you for being so brave and for letting me go to make my dreams come true. Thank you."

Tim Robbins, declared best supporting actor for the Clint Eastwood-directed drama "Mystic River," spoke of the many film and TV productions being shot outside of the US: "There are so many supporting actors that make their living: day players and people my age, a little bit older, in SAG that have taken a hit in the past few years because of a lot of runaway productions. And I'd like to encourage all the power that's in this room to try to bring back some of those productions in the United States of America."

Seizing a moment

Sean Astin, one of the actors who spoke on behalf of the cast of "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," which won best performance by a cast in a motion picture, picked up Robbins' challenge to SAG's leadership.

Astin, who played Sam Gamgee in the epic hobbit trilogy, said, "I wanted to seize a moment. My mom (actress Patty Duke) was the president of this union for a term and half ... Tim Robbins said that he encouraged the power that's in the room to bring productions back to America. I agree with him ... I want to encourage all the power in (this) room in front of the camera to pay attention to our union when it's not the awards show ... Some of us make a lot more money than others, but I think we need to be involved, or the union will not endure, and these awards shows will not last."

Esteemed actress Meryl Streep added another trophy to her already large collection by winning the best actress in a TV movie or miniseries for HBO's AIDS drama, "Angels in America."

She lightened up the "political" mood of the evening by quipping, "If anyone's biting his cuticles, lest I say anything political now, I'm only an actor ... God forbid I should seem hypercritical, but it is a fact, I've been lucky to act with gratitude and joy, in this story of love that shone down from above on the life of a dying boy."

Poignant triumph

Streep's co-star in "Angels," the equally venerated thespian Al Pacino, walked off with the best actor equivalent of the category.

It was a poignant triumph for the cast of "Sex and the City" who won the best performance by an ensemble in a comedy series but who are ending their reign as TV's New York gal pals. After thanking co-star Sarah Jessica Parker, Kristin Davis exclaimed, "We've had more good-looking men on our show . . ."

"And more fun," Kim Cattrall butted in.

Backstage, INQUIRER asked Pacino for his comment on Depp's surprise win. "He won?" Pacino reacted with a smile. "I am surprised." Pacino continued, "It just goes to show that you never know who's going to win in these award shows." But he went on to praise Depp as a fine actor who is finally being recognized. Moments later, Pacino asked again, "He won?"

Pop music center opens in Valenzuela

THE CENTER for Pop Music Philippines, Inc. will open a branch in Valenzuela City at 4 p.m. today.

The branch is located at the Keppelson Building on McArthur Highway in Marulas, Valenzuela City (near Fatima).

The new studio is the 13th branch of the Center for Pop Music, Philippines.

The center aims to bring multi-awarded training programs to the people of Valenzuela City and nearby cities and towns.

Among the successful students of the Center for Pop Music Philippines include pop star Sarah Geronimo, who started training when she was 8 years old. Sarah came back to the center in 2003 for a refresher course in preparation for her participation in Viva's "Search for a Star." Sarah is now a true pop star after her first album under Viva Records sold 90,000 copies since its release, making it a triple platinum album.

Aside from Sarah, the center boasts of other pop stars, like Nina, Josh Santana, Nyoy Volante, Erik Santos, Roxanne Barcelo, Roselle Nava, Dessa, Geneva Cruz, Heart Evangelista, King, Ruffa Mae Quinto, Ladine Roxas, and five singers who went on to be cast as Miss Saigon, among others.

SHOW TIME

The Center for Pop Music, Philippines in Marulasis is headed by Rita Gemenez (branch manager); Von Jairus Ferandez (coach); Claire Bustamante (cashier); Cecille San Miguel (Registrar); and Boy Galang (technician).

Butch Albarracin, president and CEO of the Center for Pop Music Philippines, said other branches would be opened on Juan Luna Street, Binondo, Manila and in Almanza, Las Piñas this March.

The other branches are located in Makati; Parañaque; Cubao, QC; Pamplona, Las Piñas; Marikina; Roces Avenue, QC; San Pedro, Laguna; Lagro/Novaliches; Dasmariñas, Cavite; Malolos, Bulacan; Masinag, Antipolo; and Cebu City.

For more information, call the branch at 291-2746 or 444-7026, or the head office at 727-5293.

Nestor's greatest love . . .

From page A24

on the Bible quietly," he said.

De Villa also brought his new religion to work as a commercial photographer, refusing to take pictures of vices that would offend God, such as cigarettes and liquor.

Joby related that even when his father learned that he had cancer last year, "he was not bitter and angry with God."

"He always told us that his life was in God's hands and even thanked Him for bringing us all together during the last four months of his life," Joby recalled.

The Soriano family did a lot of reminiscing during De Villa's final months. They remembered fondly how they grew up in an unusual household.

"I always thought Nida was my second mother and Kaye (Torres) was my sister because they were always around," Joby said, grinning. "Popular people always went in and out of our house, but it never really got to us."

De Villa never had any regrets, according to Joby.

"He did whatever he was sent here on Earth to do: make people happy through his films and unshakable faith in God," Joby said.

De Villa is survived by his wife, Marilu Cacho, four children and 13 grandchildren.

His remains, which were cremated last Saturday as a fulfillment to his last wish, are now at the New Life Christian Center in Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa.

He will be brought to the Christ Commission Fellowship, St. Francis Square, Julio Vargas Avenue, Mandaluyong City, on Thursday where friends and family at Christ's Commission Fellowship can spend time remembering the man. Service will be held at 7:30 p.m. on the same day.

A contract star of LVN Pictures, De Villa started his career at age 23. His screen coupling with slain actress Nida Blanca in the '50s in movies like "Romansa sa Nayon" and later on in the television show "Nida-Nestor Show" made De Villa a show biz icon, a lovable leading man, and a benchmark for other aspiring actors.

Sorry, Segundo

"TE AMO Maging Sino Ka Man" is the title of the top-rating soap series featuring Argentinean superstar Segundo Cernadas and Iza Calzado. The series, directed by Khyrss Adalla and Lore Reyes, premiered on GMA 7 last Feb. 2.

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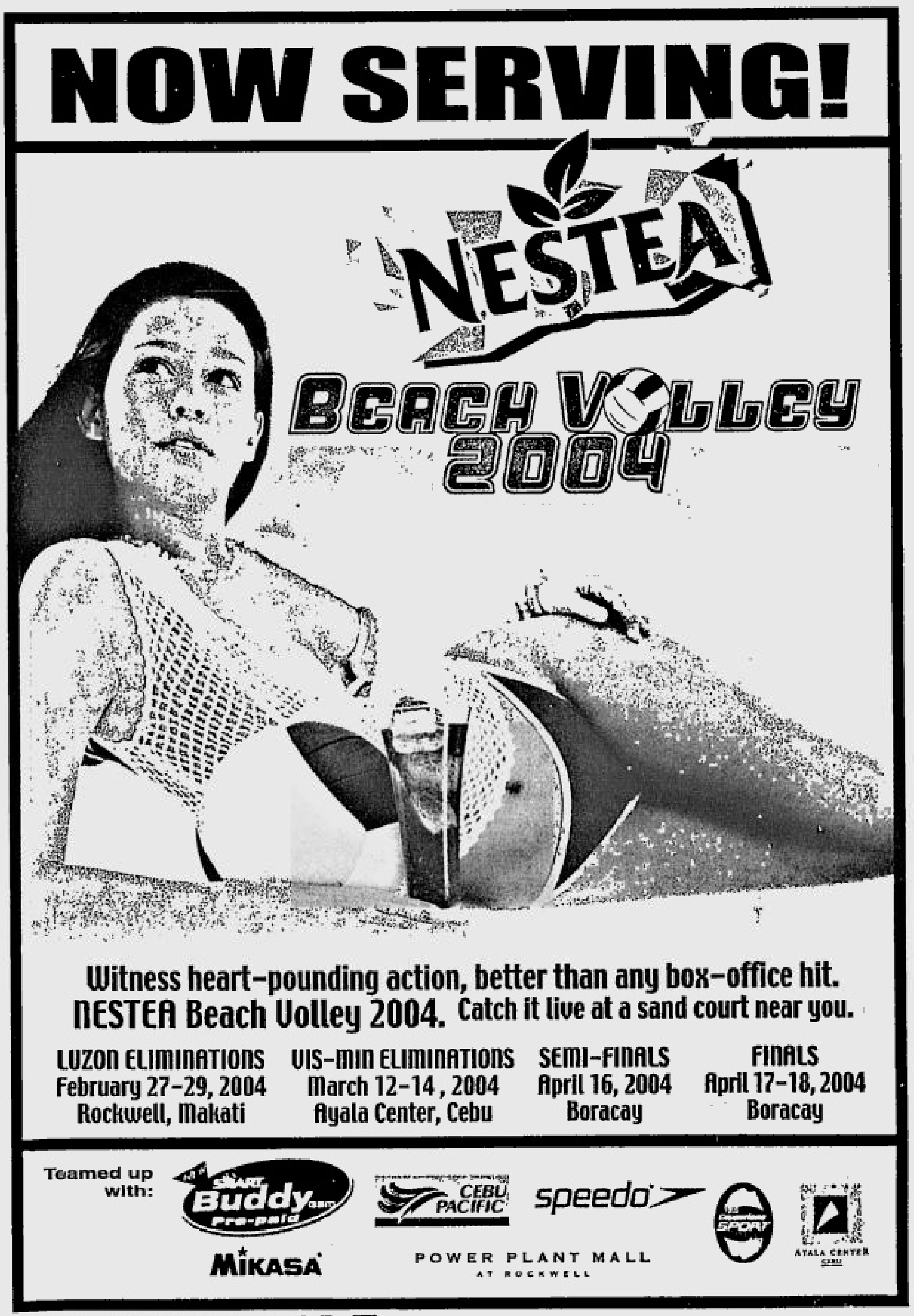
SM Megamall Cinema 7		SM Manila Cinema 7		SM Southmall Cinema 6		SM Cebu Cinema 4	
Master & Commander (P13)	12:00nn	Master & Commander (P13)	12:05nn	Lord of the Rings 3 (P13)	11:30am	Lord of the Rings 3 (P13)	11:30am
Master & Commander (P13)	2:50pm	Seabiscuit (GP)	2:55pm	Master & Commander (P13)	3:20pm	Mystic River (R13)	3:20pm
Lord of the Rings 3 (P13)	5:40pm	Mystic River (R13)	5:45pm	Mystic River (R13)	6:10pm	Lord of the Rings 3 (P13)	5:50pm
Mystic River (R13)	9:30pm	Seabiscuit (GP)	8:30pm	Master & Commander (P13)	8:50pm	Master & Commander (P13)	9:30pm

Watch The 76th Academy Awards on March 1, 9:30 am with replay at 7 pm on RPN 9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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Nestor's greatest love: his family, Jesus Christ

By Margaux Ortiz

HE MAY have been a popular matinee idol and a respected movie star for half a century. But the late Nestor de Villa wanted to be remembered as "a man who loved God and Jesus Christ above everything else," and died glorifying his Creator.

People closest to him also remember him for his passion for two other great loves in his life: his family and Jesus Christ.

De Villa, Gines Francisco Soriano in real life, died in his sleep after a cardiac arrest in his home in Alabang, Muntinlupa. He was 75.

"A father who sacrificed for us" was how Soriano's third son, Joby, described the veteran actor, who is the other half of the popular Nida-Nestor love team in the '50s.

"I could not imagine him as anyone else. He was always a show biz personality since I was born," Joby said of his father. "But I found it different because everywhere we go people would open doors and give us special treatment."

Special

Joby said he had always thought of his dad as special, as a film star who would make people laugh, cry and feel a certain type of joy.

Although his father would be gone for weeks at a time on shootings and other show biz commitments, he would always find a way to make it up to his children.

"We would always go on vacations and trips, and he would teach me all kinds of sport," Joby remembered fondly.

DE VILLA

Although he had heard that his father had drunk and womanized, he never felt De Villa took them for granted, Joby said.

"He wanted to give us the best education and sacrificed to send us to the best schools," Joby said.

He remembered being bitten by the acting bug when he was younger because of his father's movie-star status, but De Villa would not hear of it.

"My siblings and I all wanted to become actors so we could have a taste of what our dad went through," Joby said, laughing. "We wanted to convince dad, but he wanted us to finish our studies first."

De Villa told his four children to take up business courses before they could embark on a separate show biz career, stressing that "life in the limelight could be short-lived."

Joby said they all agreed, and found out later that they were not interested in show biz anymore.

"Although we really wanted to make a career out of show biz when we were younger by joining school plays and even participating in some of dad's films, we eventually grew out of it," Joby said with a smile.

Life-changing experience

He said all Soriano children were educated in the United States and eventually became professionals. Jeric, 47, is now a commercial director; Gicky, 46, a pastor in the US; Joby, 44, a pastor of the Christ Commission Fellowship, and Karel, 43, a homemaker who finished a business degree.

But his parents' marriage was not perfect, especially with his father's popularity, admitted Joby.

"My parents were normal and there were many instances when they wanted to live separate lives," Joby said.

But he stressed that a life-changing experience with a newfound religion changed his father's views on life.

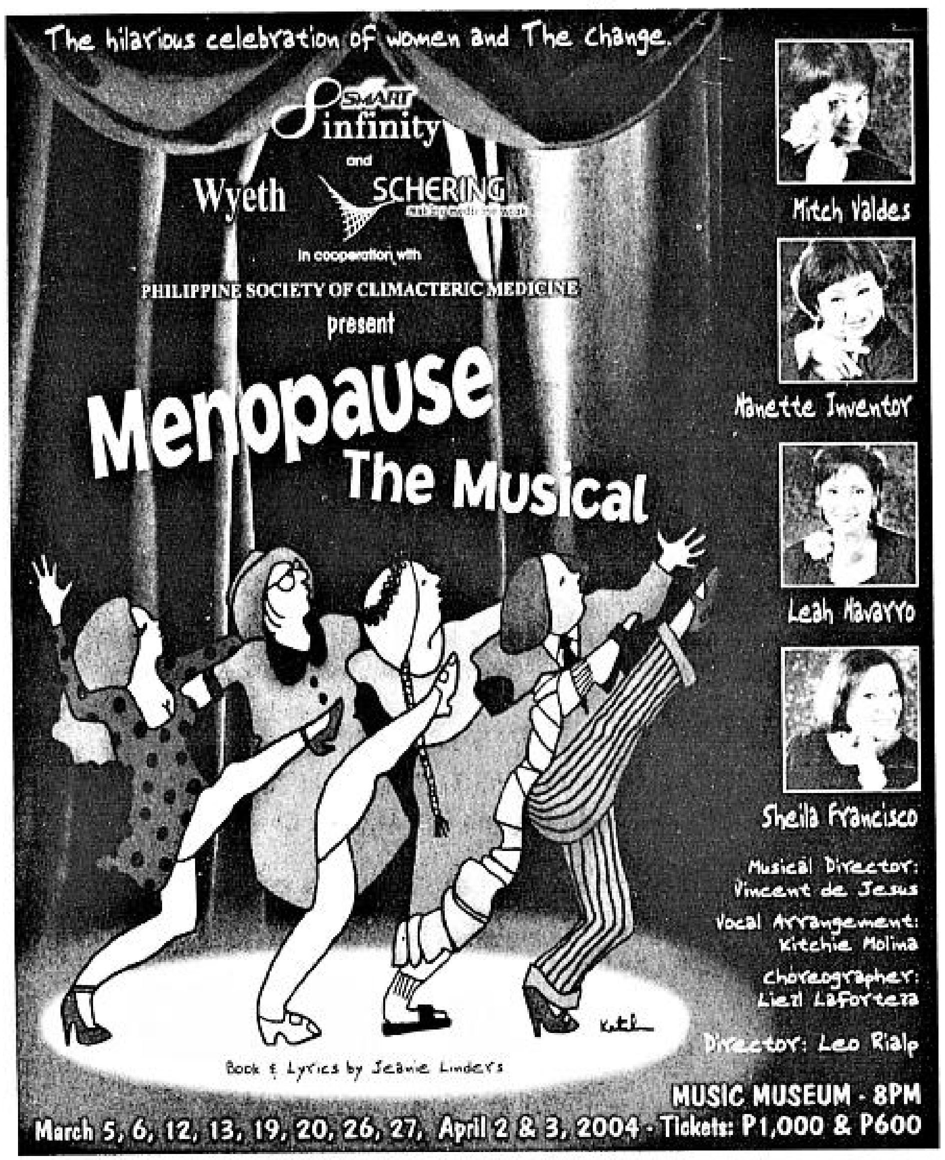
Before 1984, De Villa was a nominal Catholic who did all the traditional things required of his religion.

"One day he just found Jesus and had a change of heart," Joby said, referring to his dad's metamorphosis into a devout Born Again Christian.

Joby himself had become a pastor. He described his father as a person who had undergone a complete transformation, living his life by the word of God and sharing the good news of the gospel wherever he went.

"He became a very spiritual man, reading the Bible alone and reflecting

NESTOR'S/ A23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Peso rallies as BSP warns speculators

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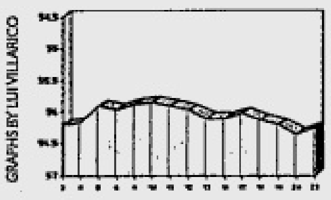

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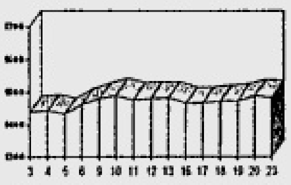
Stocks end shade down

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B3)

STOCKS ended down yesterday on profit-taking in select blue chips, but gains in telecoms player PLDT and its 45 percent-owned unit Piltel tempered market losses.

The 33-share main index dropped 5.45 points, or 0.37 percent, to 1,482.57 points.

But Pilipino Telephone Corp. (Piltel), the nation's third-biggest mobile phone firm, jumped 10.6 percent, or 14 centavos, to P1.46 on renewed speculation it might merge with larger affiliate Smart Communications Inc., despite a denial by their parent, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

In a disclosure to the exchange, Piltel denied it was in talks with creditors to rearrange its debt, but said the board had approved Smart's request to be furnished with certain documents on Piltel's debt situation.

PLDT, which accounts for about 58 percent of the mobile industry through Smart and Piltel, jumped 1.04 percent or P10 to P975.

"Investors are keenly awaiting what will happen to Smart and Piltel. The guessing game continues," said First Grade Holdings managing director Astro del Castillo.

Market turnover fell to P304.78 million from Friday's P1.72 billion.

In the broader market, losers beat gainers 26 to 14, with 33 stocks unchanged.

"Investors locked in their gains ahead of rumors that the Supreme Court will soon release its ruling on FPJ's citizenship," Del Castillo said, referring to a ruling on whether film star Fernando Poe Jr. can contest presidential elections in May.

Reuters

By Doris C. Dumlao and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday threatened to raise the reserve requirement on banks to as high as 30 percent from the existing 19 percent if needed to quell speculative attacks against the peso.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters yesterday that while there was no need to resort to such a drastic measure yet, he warned that the institution was prepared to unleash all the tools available to it.

The peso closed at an historic low of 56.35 against the dollar on Friday although the local currency firmed up yesterday to close at 56.255 to $1 on expectations that the BSP would take some action after President Macapagal-Arroyo sought a meeting with the governor to discuss developments in the currency market.

Buenaventura had told President Macapagal-Arroyo Saturday night there was no need to panic over the peso's fall to an historic low last week.

In a briefing in Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Buenaventura explained to the President that the peso's weakness was only a "temporary blip" which would dissipate "once the political scenario becomes clearer."

Buenaventura said that the peso has been affected by "political jitters caused by fears of the unknown."

Buenaventura had to personally brief the President over the weekend after the latter had sought an emergency meeting with the BSP and the Department of Finance Friday when the peso touched an historic low 56.35 to the US dollar.

The President decided to take a direct hand in the currency market "to cushion the negative impact of the weak peso on the lives of ordinary people and to prevent the adverse domino effect it could bring."

On Friday, the President said "good sense is being overridden by phantom fears." On Saturday, before the meeting with Buenaventura, the President again warned that the local "currency will continuously be attacked by political developments in the country."

Bunye said that after the meeting, the President concurred with Buenaventura's assessment that the peso would stabilize once the political uncertainty was settled although no exact time frame was mention.

Bunye said the President only wanted to get an assessment on the peso situation and that she had no intention of taking special actions to stem the currency's fall.

Bunye said that Buneventura assured the President that the BSP was continuously monitoring the foreign exchange transactions of banks to ensure that they comply with its regulations and "that they remain prudent with their decisions and do not take advantage of the political uncertainty."

Asked about the BSP's options, Buenaventura said: "The only advice we're giving them (banks) is use prudence. Don't take advantage of the volatile situation in the political side for your own benefit because it may force the central bank to take monetary option that in the long run would also hurt them."

"Monetary policy is always an option," Buenaventura said, though he admitted that whenever the BSP resorted to tightening measures, "everybody suffers."

Buenaventura said the coun

PESO/ B3

Prices of basic commodities seen to rise

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PRICES of basic commodities are expected to go up following an uptrend in the prices of raw materials in the world market and due to an impending transport fare increase, according to the Consumer and Oil Price Watch.

Transport groups are asking for an increase of between P1 and P2 for the first 4 kilometers.

COPW chair Raul T. Concepcion said the group was making efforts to temper the price increases, which were especially likely with the depreciation of the peso.

The local currency fell to a historic low of 56.35 to the dollar last Friday.

Concepcion said prices of essential products were also being pushed up by expectations of increases in petroleum prices.

"We are concerned and we are trying to find ways in which these factors would not fuel inflation," the industrialist said.

He said that, for instance, the price of pork liempo went up to P140 a kilo from P110.

"We understand that the situation is being aggravated by the need to import inputs like corn and soya, prices of which are rising in the world market," Concepcion said. "We hope (we could find ways to mitigate) the price increases."

On the other hand, the consumer welfare advocate said prices of chicken were stable considering that the country was not affected by the bird flu scare.

"But we (the government and the private sector) must make sure that we have adequate supply of chicken—considering the bigger consumption that is being fueled by election spending," he said.

Also, Concepcion expressed support for the Department of Trade and Industry in urging cement makers to lower their prices.

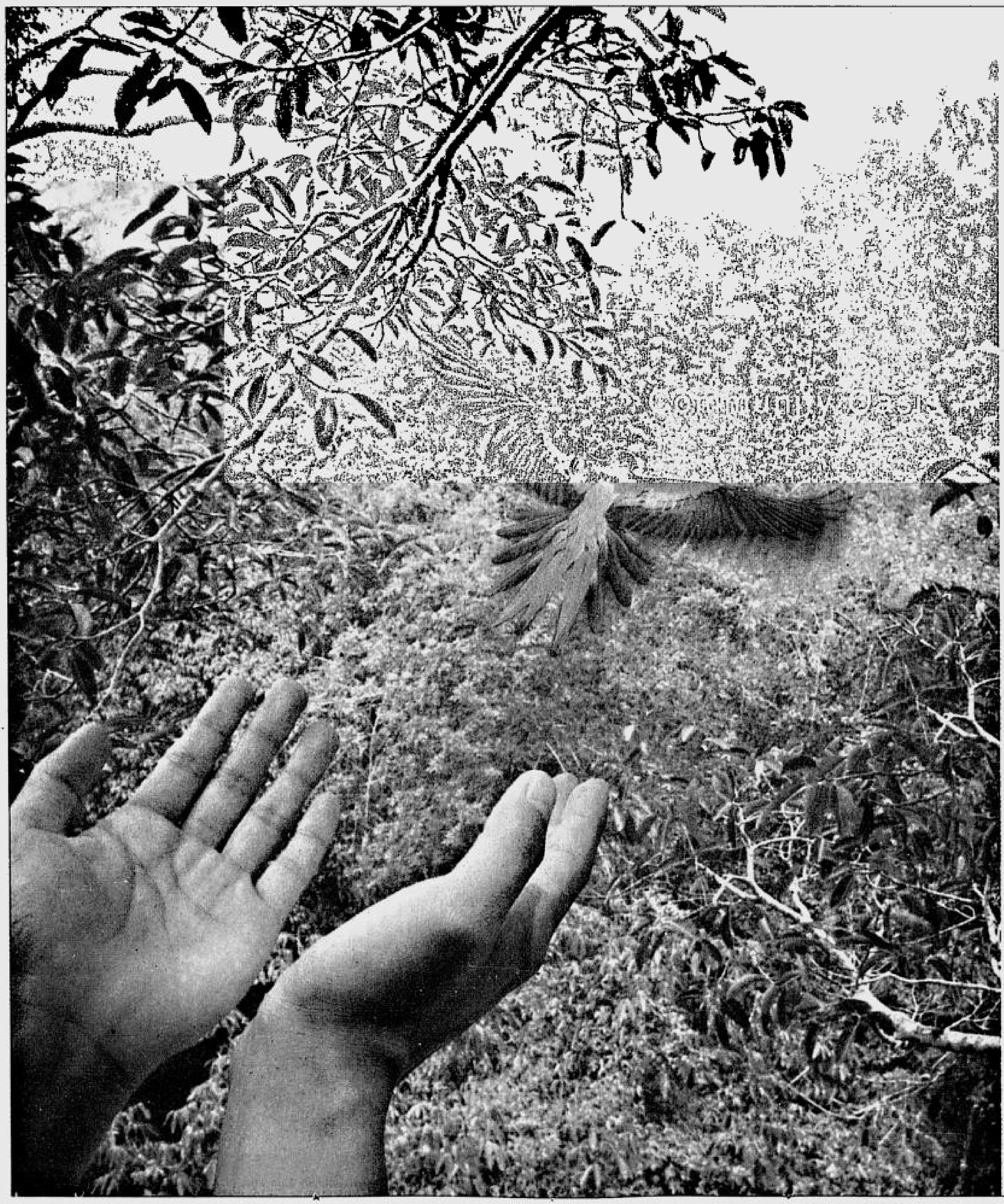
"We appeal to all cement manufacturers to publicly disclose their prices, especially those in Cebu. Only Union Cement Corp. and Cemex Philippines have made their prices public," he said.

In a statement, Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said the National Price Coordinating Council had met recently to address the impending fare increase, which would trigger a chain reaction affecting the prices of basic commodities.

"While a long-term solution is necessary to permanently solve this situation, we are also coming up with short- and medium-term solutions," Cristobal said.

He said that the Department of Trade and Industry, for its part,

PRICES/ B3



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TOYOTA

Neda calls on SC to steer clear of economic issues

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority criticized the Supreme Court for "intervening" in economic issues.

"The Supreme Court should learn to become less and less involved in matters concerning the economy. It should likewise realize the economic consequences of its actions," said Neda Director General Romulo Neri in an interview.

Neri was reacting to the recent SC ruling that declared unconstitutional some of the provisions of Republic Act No. 7942, also known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

The court decision prohibited the government from issuing financial and technical service agreements (FTAAs), which entitled foreign mining firms to explore for minerals in the country.

Since few Filipino-owned firms can afford to engage in the capital-intensive business of mining, the industry said discouraging the entry of foreign investors will hamper efforts to revitalize the mining industry.

Neri, who also sits as Economic Planning Secretary, said the SC did not consider the welfare of the majority when it came out with the decision.

Prior to the SC ruling, the mining industry estimated that a favorable business environment would bring in at least $4.5 billion in initial investments.

The industry also estimated exports to reach $2.5 billion annually, thus, bringing the Philippines back on the list of the world's biggest mineral exporters.

The country currently earns a measly $500 million from mineral exports per year, significantly lower than the estimated $1.2 billion generated every year during the 1980s.

Neri said the SC decision on mining was the latest on the list of court rulings that prevented the entry of investments in the country.

He cited a court decision in the 1990s that barred a Malaysian firm from investing in Manila Hotel.

The decision was based on the principle that the hotel is a national patrimony, and should therefore be wholly owned by locals.

RP eyes coco exports to China

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINES plans to export coconut products to China, particularly oleochemicals.

Oleochemicals are used as raw materials in the manufacturing of medicine, soaps and cosmetics.

Philippine Coconut Authority Administrator Danilo Coronacion said in an interview that a number of Chinese buyers have already made inquiries.

In another development, the Agriculture Department and the coconut industry are rushing to acquire at least 17 copra driers to increase coco exports to Europe.

The use of copra driers will help Philippine exporters meet the standards on moisture content imposed by Europe.

Exports to Europe dropped by 19 percent last year due partly to the high moisture content of local copra meal.

Europe requires a maximum alflatoxin level of 20 parts per billion, as against the local standard of 220 ppb.

Philippine copra meal is used as feed for livestock in Europe.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 23, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	12,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46	44.5	45	141,800
China Banking Corp.	650	650	650	650	860
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39.5	38.5	39	62,600
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	130,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26	25.5	25.5	207,000
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	2,100
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	3,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	14	13	14	6,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.34	190,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	180	181	178	178	1,310
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1500	1495	1495	440
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	2,510,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	880	890	875	890	7,620
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.037	200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.28	1.46	1.2	1.46	41,366,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	965	975	965	975	139,210
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	3,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	87,400
Manila Electric Co. B	32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5	110,900
Petron Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.05	3.05	1,065,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	51,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.99	0.95	0.99	110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.24	1.36	1.24	1.32	1,988,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	149,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4	4.25	4	4.25	8,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31.5	31	31	5,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	19.25	19.5	19.25	19.25	861,400
Pancake House Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	4,477,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56.5	55.5	56.5	134,500
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	69.5	69.5	69.5	36,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6	6	5.9	5.9	493,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	60,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	50,000
APC Group Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	700,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	75,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	6,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	160,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.25	23.25	23	23	186,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	900,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	60,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	370,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	5,140,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13	13	13	13	10,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	10,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	68,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	210,000
Manila Jockey Club	9	9	9	9	2,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.5	58,400
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7	3,128,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.14	1,100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,000,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	496,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	30,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	2,336,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	550,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	250,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	60,000

Peso rallies as BSP . . .

From page B1

try's economic fundamentals remained sound and the business sector in general was optimistic about economic prospects in the first semester this year. He said the movement of the peso, however, continued to be affected by political jitters principally caused by "fears of the unknown."

"The banking sector should ensure that they comply with BSP regulations, remain prudent with their decisions, and not to take advantage of the political uncertainty. In the meantime, the BSP examination sector shall continue to closely monitor foreign exchange transactions of banks," he said.

"So what we're saying to the banks is—please control your traders. If they cannot read between the lines, we can translate it for them," he said.

DISCLOSURES

HERSHEY Foods Corp. and **Alaska Milk Corp.** signed a standard license agreement granting the latter the exclusive license to manufacture and sell Hershey's milk drink products in the country.

***

PHILIPPINE National Bank disclosed the promotion of Jose Alvaro Rubio as senior vice president. Also, four senior officers of the bank retired under its special separation incentive plan. The retired officers are Leopoldo Manuel, Emerita Diaz, Antonio Bautista Jr. and Ma. Cristina Munoz.

***

ELECTED directors of **Chemical Industries of the Philippines Inc.** were Jesus Alcordo, Antonio Garcia, Ramon Garcia, Jose Ma. Ordoveza, Suwito Tjokro, Jaime Gonzales and Manuel Alba.

***

ELECTED directors of **LMG Chemicals Corp.** were Antonio Garcia, Ramon Garcia, Eusebio Garcia Jr., Ana Maria Ordoveza, Jose Ma. Ordoveza, Alexandra Garcia, Jose Fernandez Jr., Carmelita Salgado, Jesus Alcordo, Paulus Setiawan, Suwito Tjokro, Manuel Alba and Purita Fajilan.

***

BANK of the Philippine Islands will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on March 25, 9 a.m. at the Rizal A Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Stockholders of record as of Feb. 24 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

JG Summit Holdings Inc. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on March 18, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, Pasig City. Record date is on Feb. 24. Included in the agenda of this meeting will be the reclassification of its unissued capital stock from common to preferred shares. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 23, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.798148	1.000000	56.3230
Japan	Yen	0.007321	0.009173	0.5167
United Kingdom	Pound	1.484955	1.860500	104.7889
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102659	0.128621	7.2443
Switzerland	Franc	0.633300	0.793462	44.6902
Canada	Dollar	0.597238	0.748279	42.1453
Singapore	Dollar	0.471023	0.590145	33.2387
Australia	Dollar	0.618576	0.775014	43.6511
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.117217	2.652661	149.4058
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212834	0.266660	15.0191
Brunei	Dollar	0.469637	0.588408	33.1409
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000119	0.0067
Thailand	Baht	0.020382	0.025536	1.4383
UAE	Dirham	0.217307	0.272264	15.3347
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.252900	70.5671
Argentina	Peso	0.271942	0.340716	19.1901
Brazil	Real	0.268195	0.336022	19.1901
Denmark	Kroner	0.134215	0.168158	9.4712
India	Rupee	0.017670	0.022139	1.2469
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.210067	0.263193	14.8238
Mexico	New Peso	0.072957	0.091408	5.1484
New Zealand	Dollar	0.546265	0.684416	38.5484
Norway	Kroner	0.113731	0.142493	8.0256
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013966	0.017498	0.9855
South Africa	Rand	0.119169	0.149307	8.4094
Korea	Won	0.000684	0.000857	0.0483
Sweden	Kroner	0.108906	0.136448	7.6852
Syria	Pound	0.018148	0.022738	1.2807
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024135	0.030239	1.7032
Venezuela	Kroner	0.000417	0.000522	0.0294

PLDT weighs options on Piltel debt

By Clarissa S. Batino

AS PART of ongoing efforts to restructure the huge debt of a losing subsidiary, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is studying an option for Smart Communications Inc. to absorb billions of pesos of Pilipino Telephone Corp.'s obligations.

A banking source said that PLDT had presented four options to Piltel's creditors.

Of the four alternatives, creditors were focusing on a proposal for cash-rich Smart to absorb Piltel's obligations or for PLDT to swap with Smart shares the convertible PLDT preferred shares it had issued to Piltel's creditors in 2001.

PLDT has restructured about P35 billion worth of Piltel's debts in 2001 but discussions with creditors were ongoing on how to improve the set-up.

Analysts said the talks on Piltel's debt must improve the balance sheet of the dominant carrier. But more importantly, resolving the debt burden of Piltel would allow PLDT's two mobile phone subsidiaries to finally merge.

"We advise that PLDT and Smart are in the preliminary stage of studying various alternatives regarding the indebtedness of Piltel. Once these alternatives are more definite, the plan is to present them for consideration of the respective boards of PLDT and Smart," the source said.

Piltel disclosed yesterday to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its board of directors approved Smart's request to be furnished "certain documents" related to the former's debts. In the same statement, the losing phone company denied it was in talks with creditors to "rearrange" (restructure) its debts.

Among Piltel's creditors are Chase Manhattan, Bank of America, Citibank NA, HSBC Corp., Deutsche Bank, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Equitable PCI Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines and Bank of the Philippine Islands.

But the creditors, according to the bank official, were not too keen on the plan for Smart to absorb the Piltel debt because this would adversely affect the balance sheet of the country's biggest and most profitable mobile phone company.

Smart reported a net income of P16.1 billion in 2003, up from P6.2 billion the previous year.

Smart single-handedly lifted the earnings of its parent firm PLDT and allowed the dominant carrier to register a net profit of P11.2 billion despite Piltel's losses and huge provisions for failed investments and uncollected receivables.

BDO can raise funds for SSS deal

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank is optimistic it can raise P8 billion to make a cash payment for the purchase of the Social Security System's (SSS) 29-percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank.

Sources told the INQUIRER that Banco de Oro could raise the funds through bridge loans with foreign institutions.

They said Banco de Oro initially offered to buy the 188 million shares held by SSS at P43.50 each by paying cash upfront but the private pension fund wanted an extended payment option so it would not reflect accounting losses.

SSS has a binding agreement to sell its controlling stake in Equitable PCI Bank to Banco de Oro of retail magnate Henry Sy Sr. The P14-billion purchase price for the 29-percent block represented a 30-percent premium over the market price at the time the deal was announced.

Sources said a P1-billion payment would be made initially once the deal is sealed and the remaining P13 billion secured by 6 1/2-year promissory notes.

"It is an option to cut both our actual and opportunity losses because SSS would be able to lock into an asset that will yield a rate of return of at least 9.5 percent for the next 6-1/2 years," SSS president Corazon De la Paz said earlier.

Top SSS officials had justified the sale, saying it was the best deal the SSS had made in recent years from which it expected to earn some P14.7 billion over the next six and a half years.

Prices

From page B1

was already accepting applications for authority to import duty-free and duty-reduced spare parts.

The DTI last week announced that the rules for the temporary reduction of the duties had been approved. However, the rules have yet to be published. Once effective, the reduction would be good for six months.

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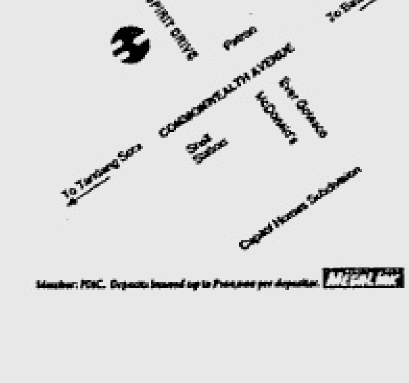

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Relocation to push through despite 'basic' woes

By Jerry Esplanada

(Last of three parts)

NO electricity. No water system. No transport network. No schools, hospitals, public markets and other mass housing-related facilities. No job opportunities.

Add to that the thought of starting a new life, literally in the middle of nowhere.

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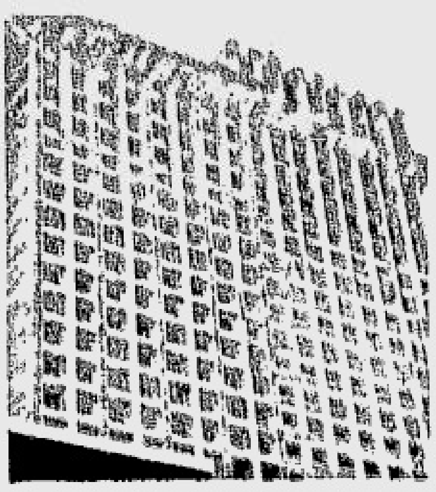

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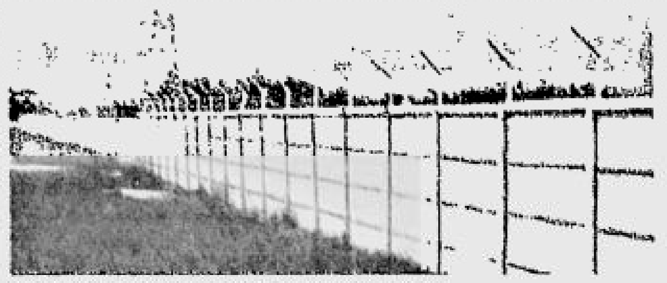

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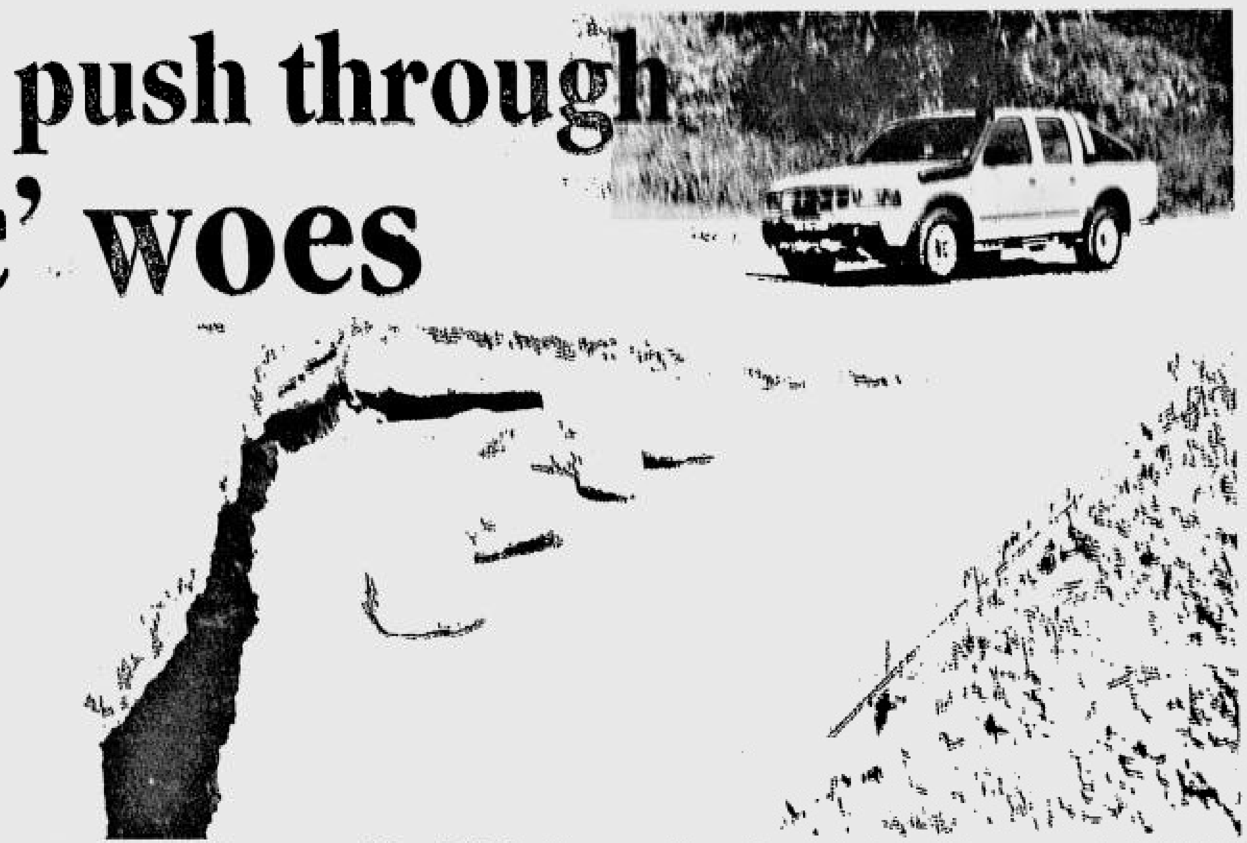

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By Jerry Esplanada

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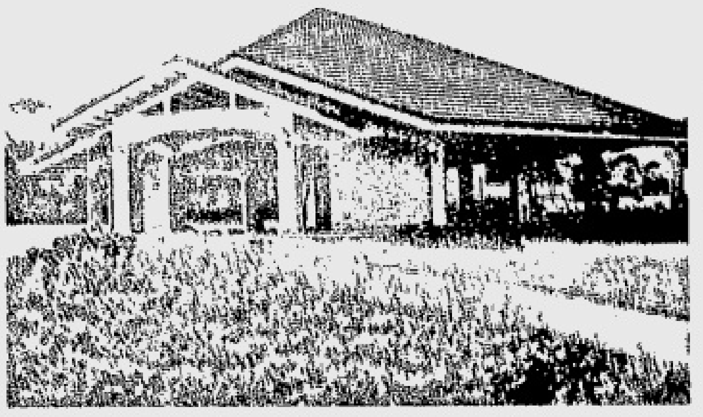

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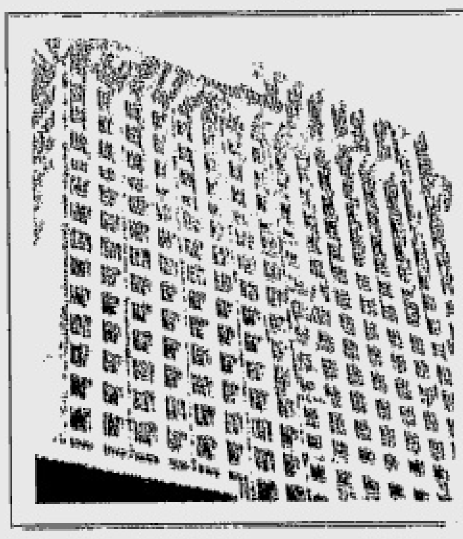

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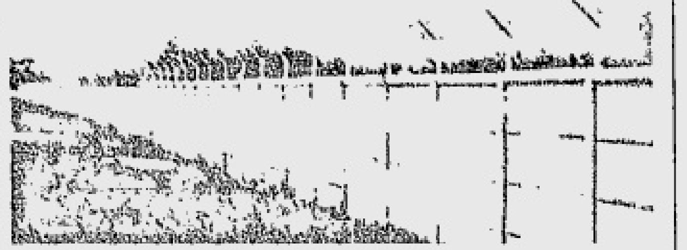

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These Ls serve as reminders for undecided buyers

BUILDING DREAMS

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

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Some of them have been looking for pieces of property for years and up to now, they still have not bought the home of their dreams.

Signals to buy soon

Prior to investing in real estate, it is always best to be well informed and comfortable about the property that we are considering. If you have waited too long to buy one, then think of the Ls as signals that you should buy soon. The various Ls are:

- **Land Prices**—Prices of real estate have been gradually increasing with time. Even if it went down during the financial crisis in 1997, it has steadily gone up since then. If you postpone your purchase, you will have to face a higher price by the time you buy.

In buying land, it is best that you fully assess your financial capability to ensure that you can really afford what you would want to have. Buying real estate is a big financial decision and takes a lot of planning and preparation.

- **Labor Costs**—Labor costs are continuously on the rise. With increasing prices of fuel, basic commodities, labor and professional fees, the cost of constructing a house is expected to go up. This increase of production would translate to higher selling price of real estate products.
- **Lumber Costs**—While lumber is the commonly used material, especially for houses in the provinces, its cost and that of other construction materials are also increasing. Prices of steel bars have increased tremendously over the past few months. This of course would have an effect on the completed cost of the project. Many builders are now charging additional amounts from their clients due to the escalation of prices.
- **Legal Costs**—Since real estate prices are going up, then the cost of maintaining these pieces of property also is going up. Many local government units increase taxes on real estate on a regular basis. Transaction costs have also gradually increased over the years and it is difficult to imagine a reduction of these costs.
- **Lending Rates**—Lending rates are still very affordable and are still low. But take note that they have gradually increased over the past few years. When the purchasing power of the peso weakens, interest rates tend to inch up. If you think that interest rates for housing loans may go down, it may take some time before they do.

In borrowing money to finance your home, you may want to be protected against any interest rate adjustment over the next few years. It may be a wise idea to fix the interest rate for a fixed period. Although you might get a rate that is higher, the protection will be worth it.

- **Leasing Costs**—The construction of infrastructure requires heavy equipment that is normally leased. Again, with higher fuel prices, lease costs will go up. Higher lease costs translate to higher total costs for real estate products.

Best time to buy

If you keep postponing the purchase of your home, you may have to continually catch up with the increases in real estate prices. Once you have decided on the property that you want and have looked at your finances, then it may be time to go ahead with the purchase.

After looking at all of the Ls of buying real estate, you will be rewarded with another two Ls: A Lifestyle and Living Space that you have always dreamed of.

* * *

E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacifc.net.ph.

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First Creba woman president inducted Feb. 26 at Dusit Hotel

SOLIVEN

THE 2004 SET of officers and directors of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) led by national president Purita Ramirez Soliven, its first-ever woman president, will be inducted by Sen. Manuel B. Villar on Thursday at the Dusit Hotel ballroom in Makati City.

Creba observed last year its 30th founding anniversary as the country's oldest, largest and most active real estate and housing industry organization.

Villar will be the guest of honor and speaker during the induction of officers and the board of directors headed by chair-Creba founder Manuel M. Serrano. Villar chairs the Senate committees on foreign relations and finance.

Since 1988, Soliven is the chief operating officer of the V.V. Soliven Group of Companies. Before this, she served as its executive vice president and treasurer.

The other officers are Romeo Thaddeus R. Liamzon Jr., executive vice president; Rosemarie C. Basa, VP-finance; Editha L. Manansala, VP-internal affairs; Techie P. Bautista, VP-external affairs; Avelilna P. Acuña. VP-chapter affairs; lawyer Luis B. Pangilinan Jr., corporate secretary; Teresita C. Millan, treasurer; Choy L. Alas, auditor; and former national presidents Jerry M. Navarrete, Jaime A. Cura and Domingo D. De Vera, John Marie N. Lizares, Florante C. Ofrecio, and Victor T. Salinas, directors; Eduardo Guttierez-Ong, public relations officer; Florentino S. Dulalia Jr., immediate past president; and Pedro C. Tario, presidential adviser.

Soliven holds a master's degree in urban planning from the University of the Philippines and bachelor of arts degree in psychology from the Philippine Women's University. She attended the Executive Development Institute for tourism program of the University of Hawaii and passed the real estate brokers' examination.

Soliven attended various seminars such as those in successful business strategies and winning management styles, value engineering, five "S" of management, investments and opportunities in real estate, financial analysis and cash management, total quality management, withholding tax, Weaver course on real estate and personal income taxation.

Villar earned his bachelor of arts and masteral degrees in business administration from the University of the Philippines. He established what then was deemed the most successful low-cost property development firms in the country.

He was featured in international publications such as the Far Eastern Economic Review, Asiaweek, Asiamoney and the Asian Business Review. He was one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in 1986 and received the Agora Award for Marketing Management in 1989, Most Outstanding CPA chosen by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in 1990, and Most Outstanding UP Alumnus in 1991.

Villar was the first House Speaker in the Philippines to impeach a President, thus paving the way for elevating the case to the Senate for trial. He was elected senator in 2001, became Senate President Protempore, the second highest post in the chamber.

Homeowners deserve…

From page B4

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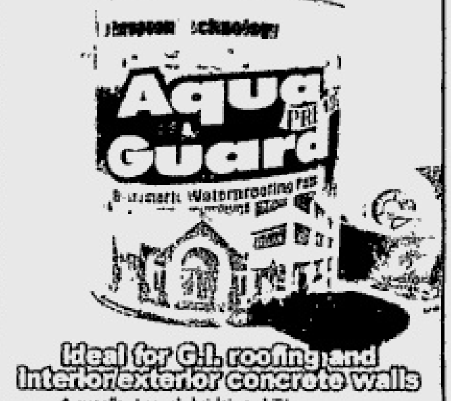

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Notice is given that Jollibee Stock Cert. #3749, #38057, #56142 & #1406 under the name of Mr. Edwin V. Lim were lost.
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LRA Record No. N-76015

NOTICE OF INITIAL HEARING

To the Hon. Solicitor General, Office of the Solicitor General, 134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, the Director, Land Management Bureau, Escolta, Manila; the Regional Executive Director, Region VI, DENR, Iloilo City; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways, Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila; the Director, Bureau of Mines, Pedro Gil St., Malate; the Director, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, P.O. Box 623, all in Manila; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform, PTA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, the Director, Forest Management Bureau, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, both in Quezon City, Metro Manila; the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Prosecutor, the General Services Officer, the Provincial Engineer, the Public Works and Highways District Engineer, the CENR Officer, CENRO, Land Management Sector, all in Iloilo City, the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Council, Maasin, Iloilo AND TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

An application having been filed in the above entitled case by LUCILA ROMARATE, Widow, Brgy. Naslo, Maasin, Iloilo, thru Atty Jun Eric C. Cabardo, Rm. 1, 2nd Floor Boy Scouts Bldg., Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City praying for the registration and confirmation of the title to the following described land.

A parcel of Land (Plan of land, Psu-06-001535) situated in the Barangay of Naslo, Municipality of Maasin, Province of Iloilo, Island of Panay. Bounded on the SW. & NW., along lines 1-2-3-4-5 by property occupied by Lucila Romarate; on the NE., by New Course Tigum River; on the SE., along lines 6-7-1 by Existing Road to Janiuay. Beginning at a point marked "1" on plan being N. 21 deg. 50'E., 539.91 m. from BBM # 85, Cad. 38, Iloilo Cadastre

thence N. 27 deg. 20'W.,	12.30 m. to point 2;
thence N. 37 deg. 08'W.,	15.30 m. to point 3;
thence N. 67 deg. 54'W.,	15.15 m. to point 4;
thence N. 23 deg. 33'E.,	26.58 m. to point 5;
thence S. 82 deg. 35'E.,	69.17 m. to point 6;
thence S. 30 deg. 10'W.,	15.36 m. to point 7;
thence S. 53 deg. 56'W.,	52.85 m. to point of beginning.

containing an area of TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE (2,275) SQUARE METERS, more or less. All corners referred to are indicated on the plan and are marked on the ground by PS cyl. conc. mons. 15 x 40 cms.; bearings true; surveyed by Engr. Filomeno P. Dano on June 1, 2003 and approved on August 19, 2003. NOTE: Basement for public use (20.00 m. wide) along lines 5-6-7 as indicated on the plan is reserved.

You are hereby served this notice to appear before this Court at its session to be held at RTC, Branch 33, Iloilo City, Philippines on the 14th day of April 2004 at 8:30 a.m., then and there to present such claim as you may have to said land or any portion thereof, and to submit evidence in support of such claim and unless you appear at said Court at the time and place aforesaid, your default will be recorded and the title to the land will be adjudicated and determined in accordance with law and the evidence before the Court and thereafter you will forever be barred from contesting said application (or petition or any decree entered thereon).

Witness: the HON. VIRGILIO M. PATAG, Judge of said Court, the 22nd day of October, 2003.

Issued at Quezon City, Philippines, this 19th day of January, 2004.

ATTEST:

BENEDICTO B. ULEP
Administrator
Land Registration Authority

By

(Sgd.) ALEXANDER N. V. ACOSTA
Acting Chief, Docket Division

A True Copy

(Sgd.) GLORIETA P. LACAMBRA
Acting Chief
Publication of Notices Section

(PDI - Feb. 24, 2004)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A **WARRANT OF ARREST**, has been issued by THE COURT, RTC Branch 145, City of Makati, Criminal Case No. 03-4923 against: **NELSON T. LUKBAN**, CONTRACTOR & SOLE PROPRIETOR OF PLASTERBOARD BUILDERS, whose picture appears herein with last known address at 211-B Leonardo St., Karuhatan, Valenzuela City. Any information about him may be reported to Atty. Bernardo Atienza at Tel. No. 241-6446 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday. Reward awaits information giver leading to his arrest.

NELSON T. LUKBAN

(PDI – FEBRUARY 24, 2004)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Reinsurance of NAPOCOR Minor Policies)

The DOE NPC GSIS Joint Bidding Committee (JBC), thru the Eligibility and Evaluation Group (EEG), is inviting qualified local and foreign reinsurance companies/brokers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the reinsurance of the National Power Corporation's Aviation Hull Insurance Policy with an indicative budget of US$321,800.81, and Protection & Indemnity Cover with an indicative budget of US$202,352.85, both all inclusive, for the periods 12NN 31 January 2004 to 12NN 31 January 2005, and 12NN 20 February 2004 to 12NN 20 February 2005, respectively.

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES

ISSUANCE OF ELIGIBILITY & BIDDING DOCUMENTS	PRE-BID CONFERENCE	SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF ELIGIBILITY AND BID ENVELOPES
March 1 - March 11, 2004 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. JBC Secretariat 7th Floor-EDPC Bldg. BSP Complex Roxas Blvd., Manila	March 11, 2004 2:00 p.m. Board Rm., 6th Floor-DOF Building Roxas Blvd., Manila	March 23, 2004 2:00 p.m. Office of the Chairman Board Rm., 6th Floor-DOF Building Roxas Blvd., Manila

Eligibility and bid documents shall be issued to applicants upon filing a Letter of Intent to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid and payment of a non-refundable fee of US$200.00 for each policy applied for, to the National Power Corporation.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Sufficiency of Bid Security, Post Qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of existing laws, rules and regulations.

The JBC and EEG reserve the right to reject any and all bids or Letters of Intent, waive any defect therein and accept the offer which they deem responsive and most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. PORFIRIO B. VILLENA, JR.**
Director IV, PDMSG
Presiding Officer, Evaluation and Eligibility Group
DOE-NPC-GSIS Joint Bidding Committee

(PDI – Feb. 17 & 24, 2004)

UNITED COCONUT PLANTERS BANK
MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY, PHILIPPINES 0728
P.O. BOX 4230 / M.C.P.O. BOX 2028
CABLE ADDRESS: UNIBANK • PHONES: 8119000

Notice of Deferment
UNITED COCONUT PLANTERS BANK
Annual Stockholder's Meeting

Notice is hereby given that in view of the unresolved cases still pending before the Sandiganbayan, the Board of Directors of UCPB has decided to defer the regular annual stockholder's meeting of the Bank, scheduled for March 2, 2004.

(Sgd.) **Atty. Jose A. Barcelon**
Corporate Secretary

AUCTION SALE

www.henrybutcher.com

On the instructions of Advanced Semiconductor Engineering Inc

LIVE AUCTION TWO DAY SALE
THU 4th & FRI 5th MARCH 2004 10.30AM

Production Machinery; Laboratory Equipment; Machine Tools; Material Handling; Canteen & Office Furniture Equipment
In over 3000 lots including: :

LABORATORY/TEST EQUIPMENT - VARIAN SPECTRA AA Atomic Absorption Spectrometer. HITACHI VC 6545 Digital Storage Oscilloscope. GW GPE-3030D Power Supply. AOIP PS6301 Calibrator. KITHLE Electrometer High Resistance Meter. MINCOM Handy Manometer Set. (2) LASAIR 510 Particle Measuring System. Wide Sensor Set. Asstd Footwear/Waist Strap Testers. INSTA Ice Machine. Asstd Hydrometer Sets. Asstd Thermo Hydrographs. MITUTOYO Digimatic Indicator. Asstd Ionizers. Asstd Magnifying Lamps. MEMMERT Ultra Sonic Cleaner; METTLER Laboratory Scales; Asstd Laboratory Glassware, etc

PRODUCTION MACHINERY - TOYO Two/Four Drawer Drying Cabinets. IE Bulk Tube Handler. MCT 3608. 3616 Handlers. ASECO HB3011 Handler. (2) ATS 333 Scanner/Former/Straightener Vibratory Isolation Table. IST IE-6110B Bulk Tube Handling System; ASE Auto Progressive AP50 Trim Form System. SEIKO EPSON HN 3000 High Speed IC Handler; Mold Pre-heaters, GPM Mold Press. LUMONICS Laser Mark 930. (2) High Speed Handling Machines. De-static Bubbler. Asstd Scrap Production Machinery. etc

MACHINE TOOLS - TANTUNG TSG300 Surface Grinder; STONG SC25 Pedestal Drill; Pedestal Grinder. HILTI TE704 Electric Drill; GLORY G-TEC Tig Welder. (2) Receiver Mounted Air Compressor; Asstd Loose Tools & Equipment. etc

CANTEEN - Stainless Steel Water Fountain. Stainless Steel Food Preparation Tables; Queue Rails. Stainless Steel Serving Counter w/ Food Warmers; Utensil Dispensers; Four Door Refrigerators/Freezers. Stainless Steel Range Hood. Stainless Steel Gas Stoves; Single/Double Sink Units. NATIONAL Microwave Oven; Asstd Utensils; Asstd Pots/Pans; Canteen Tables, etc

MATERIAL HANDLING/WAREHOUSE - KOMATSU FD350 3.5T cap Forklift; GNB Electric Pallet Truck. Hand Pallet Trucks; Heavy Duty Boltless Pallet Racking. Plastic Storage Bins. JUPITER Pro-tape Dispenser. CHING HUA Auto Vacuum Packing Machine; Aluminum Step Ladders. KUBOTA 150 Kg cap Digital Weighing Scale, etc

FACTORY FURNISHINGS - Stainless Steel Trolleys; Stainless Steel Storage Cabinets; Stainless Steel Computer Tables. Stainless Steel Trash Cans; Stainless Steel Racking Systems; Stainless Steel Platforms; Stainless Steel Workstations. Stainless Steel Component Trolleys; Steel Component Cabinets, Clean Room Chairs, etc

OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Single/Double Pedestal Desks; Clerical Desks; Four-Drawer Steel Filing Cabinets. Document Storage Cabinets. Mailroom Cabinet, Steel Storage Cabinets. Fabric Upholstered Clerical/Executive Chairs. Computer Tables; Exec Office Furniture. Asstd Whiteboards. Asstd Notice Boards. Training Room Chairs; Asstd Filing Systems. XEROX Colour 936 Colour Copier. (2) XEROX VIVACE 160. MITA DC 3355 SHARP Photocopiers. (3) HEWLETT PACKARD LP475. (3) 3563 A High Speed Dot Matrix Printers. DAHLE 30613 30093 Paper Shredders. PANASONIC KX-B530 Whiteboard w/ Printer. 3M/KODAK Overhead Projectors. KODAK Ektagraphic Slide Projector. WOLF/LIESEGANG Portable Projectors. (3) Projector Screens. Asstd UPS; Flat Screen Monitors. MITSUBISHI Colour Video Processor; COMPAQ PROLIANT Servers. COMPAQ Pentium III Personal Computers, etc

MISCELLANEOUS - Public Address Systems. (3) RIGID 4.25 Hp Wet/Dry Vacuum Cleaners. WAR GHIBL HD Vacuum Cleaners. Raised IT Room Flooring. (3) 220V Transformers. Asstd PCBs. Asstd Power Supplies; TOSHIBA 27" Television Set; TV Cabinet. Clinic Furniture, Medical Consumables. Asstd Pumps. Asstd Motors. Asstd Blowers. Asstd Electricals. Asstd Test Jigs. (4) AMANO Electronic Dust Collectors; Aluminum Doors/Frames. Plastic Paneling. Insulation. Asstd Fasteners. Asstd Paints & Chemicals. GI/Plastic Pipe. Asstd Hepa Filters, etc

**At.: Advance Semiconductor Engineering, Inc. - Lot 3, 4 & 5 Block 7
First Cavite Industrial Estate, Bo. Langkaan, Dasmarinas Cavite
On View: Wednesday 3rd March 2004 from 9:00am to 5:00pm & morning of sale days
Refundable Deposit: Php50,000 (upon registration).
Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration**

ON LINE AUCTION SALE
CLOSING DATE: WED 3rd MARCH 2004 6.00PM

(3) KOHTAKI KTS 250-5R Mold Presses (1999); AEM 3000 Stainless Steel Model A3000S-ED Strip to Strip Automatic Plating System; PAL Semi-Automatic Strip Copper Plating Line; PAL Semi-Automatic Electrode Flash Line

**Viewing is strictly by Appointment
For more details please contact Mr. Arvin Cortez - Tel: 853 3910**

HENRY BUTCHER
HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES INC.

Creba Rizal new president bared

THE Chamber of Real Estate and Builder's Association, Inc. has recently formed a charter organization in the Rizal area billed as the CREBA-Rizal chapter consequently, the new set of Board of Directors and Officers was announced to spearhead the CREBA objectives headed by its charter President, Engr. Reynaldo A. Carpio; chairman of the board, Mr. Romeo Thaddeus Lismann; VP-finance, Ms. Eliza Mechilina; VP-internal affairs, Mr. Danilo Santos; VP-external affairs, Mr. Ferdinand Bravo; corporate secretary, Ms. Virginia Escano; treasurer, Mr. Richard Marinas; auditor, Ms. May Sugawara; P.R.O., Ms. Michelle Castano and the directors: Mr. Fernando Dajon, Ms. Carmencita Delos Santos, Mr. Dennis Uy, Mr. Arnel Mojica, Mr. Renato Delizo and Mr. Cesar Tumo.

CARPIO

President Rey Carpio bared his intention to hasten effective and dynamic partner of government specifically the local government unit (Rizal area) in the attainment of meaningful advocacy for the welfare of its members and the public in general.

For individuals or parties interested to join and be part of the team Crebans of Rizal chapter, please call 944-0040, 944-0041.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON GOOD GOVERNMENT
Region 8, Tacloban

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), Region 8, invites interested parties to participate in the sealed bidding for the lease of the ground floor of the People's Center and Library located at Real St., Tacloban City as venue for "SUMMER BAZAAR" trade exhibit from May 01, 2004 to July 01, 2004.

The bidding guidelines will be available at PCGG Office, Asset Management Department, 3rd Floor, IRC Building, 82 EDSA Mandaluyong City and at the PCGG Regional Office, Nipa Hut, Jones St., Tacloban City, starting February 23, 2004. For inquiries, please contact Mr. Alfredo dela Paz at Telephone Nos. 726-0064 and 725-6958 and Mr. Renor O. Dauag at Telephone No. (053) 321-3418.

Pre-qualification requirements should be submitted on or before March 15, 2004, while bids will be received, opened and tabulated at 10:00 A.M. on March 22, 2004 in the presence of the bidders at the PCGG Office, Asset Management Department, 3rd Floor, IRC Building, 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **RENOR O. DAUAG**
Officer-in-Charge
PCGG, Region 8
Tacloban City

(PDI – Feb. 22, 23 & 24, 2004)

HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION
Republic of the Philippines
4th Flr., Jade Bldg., 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City

LOTS FOR NEGOTIATED SALE

ITEM NO.	BLOCK NO.	LOT NO.	LOT AREA (sqm.)	CLASSIFICATION	SELLING PRICE	LOCATION
1	2	6	5,000.00	INDUSTRIAL LOT	105,000,000.00	Manila Harbour Centre, Radial Rd. 10, Vitas, Tondo
2	2	7	5,000.00	- do -	105,000,000.00	- do -
3	4	10	10,000.00	- do -	205,000,000.00	- do -
4	6	20	257.89	COMMERCIAL LOT	5,544,635.00	- do -
5	16	2	2,458.40	- do -	55,314,000.00	- do -
6	16	3	2,455.40	- do -	55,246,500.00	- do -
7	17	4	3,319.70	- do -	73,033,400.00	- do -
8	18	8	419.48	- do -	9,018,820.00	- do -
9	18	9	419.48	- do -	9,018,820.00	- do -
10	18	10	419.48	- do -	9,018,820.00	- do -
11	19	12	373.37	- do -	8,027,455.00	- do -
12	19	13	373.37	- do -	8,027,455.00	- do -
13	19	14	373.37	- do -	8,027,455.00	- do -

For details, please call Sonia Villahermoso of the Cashflow Guaranty Dept. at 897-3310 & 897-3265 or Arnold Jula of the Developmental Guaranty Department at 897-3488.

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ROBERTO ZAMBARRANO ARAGON

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on February 22, 2004 at the age of 72.*

His loving wife **TONETTE**; children **Roble** and **Rhea**; daughter-in-law **Venee**; grandson **Mikey**; loyal aide **Tita**; sister-in-law **Girlie**; nephews, nieces & in-laws **Mark and Minda, May, Michael, Malou & Rene**; grandchildren **Mark Anthony & Emil**; great grandchild **Zidane**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City until Wednesday morning.

His body will be transferred to Iloilo on Wednesday at Phase V Arayat St., Alta Tierra, Jaro, Iloilo (near Alta Tierra Chapel).

Interment will be on February 28, 2004 at Tanza Municipal Cemetery at the Family Musoleum.

> "For God so loved the world,
> that He gave His only begotten Son,
> that whoever believes in Him shall
> not perish but have everlasting life."
> John 3:16

ALEJANDRO WILFREDO DIAZ CLEMENTE

**Formerly DECS Undersecretary
Chairman, First Country Financial Group**

Joined his Creator on February 22, 2004

His loving children **Daniel** and **David**, and his sisters **Luz** and **Tessie** and brother **Ador**, and other relatives mourn his passing and wish him eternal rest.

His body lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, February 26, 2004 at exactly 12 noon.

The family of the late

JOSE A. BERNAD JR.

*of Dipolog City and Ozamis City
who died on January 16, 2004*

wish to express their sincerest thanks to all those who condoled with them and prayed with them for the repose of his soul.

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12:00 noon
Day before publication

In Loving Memory
on the Sixth Death Anniversary of

Ma. Elena "Lenny" G. Yuchengco

who peacefully joined her Creator on February 25, 1998.

Her father, Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco and her family and loved ones request relatives and friends to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Holy Masses will be offered at:

Lenny Yuchengco Chapel, 3rd Floor, GPL Building, Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City
on February 24, 2004 at 6:00 p.m.

Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City
on February 25, 2004 at 6:15 a.m., 7:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

On the 1st Death Anniversary
of

ENGR. LUIS R. SALDAÑA

June 18, 1920 – Feb. 24, 2003

Of Samal, Bataan

We remember with love and supreme affection a devoted and patient husband, a wonderful, supportive and irreplaceable *Daddy*, a generous and doting *Papa* to his grandchildren, a true friend, a favourite *Tio Luis* and caring relative, an excellent Geodetic Engineer and a faithful, devout Catholic. For the eternal repose of his soul, masses are offered today in his honour at the following churches:

1. **St. Joseph Church**, Aurora Blvd., QC	12 noon
2. **National Shrine of the Sacred Heart**, San Antonio, Makati	12 noon and 6 pm
3. **Our Lady of Lourdes**, Retiro, QC	6 pm
4. **Sto. Domingo Church**, Quezon Ave., QC	6 pm
5. **Sacred Heart Parish**, Sct. Ybardolaza, Kamuning, QC	6 pm
6. **Parish of the Holy Sacrifice**, UP Diliman, QC	6 am
7. **Sta. Maria Della Strada**, Katipunan Road, QC	6 am
8. **Santuario de San Antonio**, Forbes Park, Makati City	12 noon and 6 pm
9. **Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish**, Claret School, QC	6 am
10. **St. Joseph Cathedral**, Balanga, Bataan	5:30 am
11. **Our Lady of the Holy Rosary**, Orani, Bataan	5:30 am
12. **St. Dominic Parish**, Abucay, Bataan	5:30 am

Today, February 24, 2004, a Special Holy Mass will be celebrated at St. Catherine of Siena, Samal, Bataan at 5:30 a.m. Breakfast will follow at his residence at Saldaña St., Samal, Bataan. A Special Holy Mass and Dinner will be held at the Loyola Grand Villas Community Center at Columbia St., LGV, QC at 7 pm of the same day.

We, his wife **Luding**, children **Nancy & Lito, Cathy & Ramby, Sarie & Kim, Jolan** and grandchildren **Joanne, Bianca, Nikka** and **Carlos**, are grateful for your prayers.

FELICIDAD RAMIREZ-LIBROJO

Our Dearest Mama

Peacefully joined her Creator on February 21, 2004 at the age of 64.

Her loving husband **MARIANO**; children **ANA LINA**, **ANA MARIE**, **MICHAEL**, **ANA RIZA**, **MARIANO**, Jr. & **ANAFEL**; grandchildren **JUSTINE**, **VINCE** & **PATRICIA** and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Laguna Memorial Chapels, Calamba, Laguna.

Interment will be on February 26, 2004, 1 pm at the Catholic Cemetery, Lecheria, Calamba, Laguna.

Fedora "Dolly" Luna Vallido

(Widow of Dr. Benjamin Vallido, former Vice Mayor of Noveleta)

Peacefully rests in the infinite warmth and goodness of the Lord on February 16, 2004 at the age of 78 in Vallejo, California.

Her loving children **Hony, Lito, Joji & Mafe**; children-in-law **Wilda, Mely, Rico & Alan**; grandchildren **Wing, Jeg, Twinkle, Coco, John-John, Jojo, JR., Mica & Sarah**; brother **Ruben**; sisters **Aida, Edna & Evelyn**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains will lie in state at Sta. Rosa Farm, Sta. Rosa, Noveleta, Cavite when she is brought home on February 24.

Interment will be on February 29 at the Noveleta Municipal Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at Holy Cross Parish of the Philippine Independent Church in Noveleta, Cavite.

***** Her Affiliations: Order of the Eastern Star, Order of the Amaranth, International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, Women's Organization of the Philippine Independent Church, Noveleta Teachers Club & Noveleta Women's Club. She retired in 1982 as the Music Coordinator of Noveleta Elementary School.***

Our Dearly
Beloved Papa

JUDGE ROMULO E. ABASOLO, (RET.)

of Caba, La Union
(1924 - 2004)

Peacefully joined our Creator on February 22, 2004.

His loving wife **Natividad Castañeda**; children **Nestor, Ronalyn & Ralph Vinas, Mildred & Nito** (†) **Gonzales, Julford & Janet, Chona & Edgar Ramos** and **Lewelyn**; grandchildren **RJ, Ryan, Rachel, Leo Aries, Lyra Camille, Selina, Jullianne, Janel, Katrina** and **Christopher**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, February 26, 2004 at Himlayang Pilipino after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Please be informed that the interment of
ZENAIDA GIMENO SIQUIJOR
will be on February 28, 2004 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. John the Baptist Parish, Pinaglabanan, San Juan, Metro Manila.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City,
Tels. 715-1025, 715-1031, 715-1027
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599, 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451 522-2128, (0917) 434-9976
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City
Tel. 732-0309, 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu,
Tels. 346-2543, 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City. Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City,
Tels. (082) 227-1201, 227-1258
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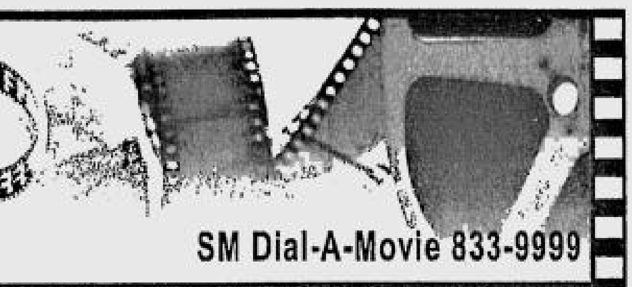

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8	RUNAWAY JURY

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3	MILNA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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3	MILAN
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

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10	21 GRAMS

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3	21 GRAMS
4	COLD MOUNTAIN
5	EMPEROR'S CLUB
6	OSCAR FILM FESTIVAL
7	MILAN
8	RUNAWAY JURY
9	KUYA
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2	CHASING LIBERTY
3	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
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5	KUYA
6	MILAN
7	KUYA
8	HAUNTED MANSION
9	COLD MOUNTAIN
10	WISHING STAIRS
11	MILAN
12	LAST SAMURAI

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4	KUYA

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5	HAUNTED MANSION
6	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
7	ORCAR FILM FESTIVAL
8	CHASING LIBERTY
9	MILAN
10	KUYA
11	WISHING STAIRS
12	21 GRAMS

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2	DIABLO
3	KUYA
4	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
5	MONA LISA SMILE
6	STUCK ON YOU

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3	HAUNTED MANSION
4	WISHING STAIRS
5	COLD MOUNTAIN
6	MILAN

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1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	LAST SAMURAI
4	KUYA

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1	RUNAWAY JURY 11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:35/8:15/ 10:25 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/ 1:10 END
2	COLD MOUNTAIN 11:05 FS/11:25 MF/2:15/5:10/8:05 / 10:40 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/1:35 END

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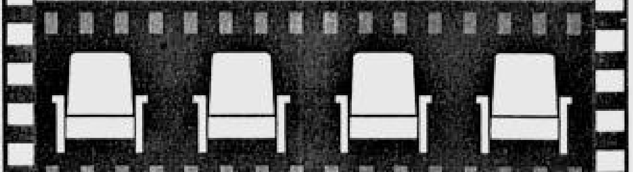

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2 COLD MOUNTAIN	2 BONE SNATCHER	2 COLD MOUNTAIN 11:45 2:50 5:55 9:00	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 RUNAWAY JURY 1:25 3:25 6:05 8:45 11:25	2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 RUNAWAY JURY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 COLD MOUNTAIN 1:15 4:20 7:25 10:30	Onstage REPERTORY'S FAME Feb 27, 28, 29, Mar. 6 & 7	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 21 GRAMS 2:55 5:35 8:15 10:55	3 MILAN
4 KUYA	4 TOTALLY BLONDE		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 MILAN 1:00 3:35 6:10 8:45 11:20	4 HAUNTED MANSION
	5 HAUNTED MANSION		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 CHASING LIBERTY 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00 11:30	5 21 GRAMS
	6 RUNAWAY JURY			
	7 CHASING LIBERTY			

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3 (DTS)	CHASING LIBERTY
4 GOLD (DTS)	RUN AWAY JURY
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	COLD MOUNTAIN
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE HAUNTED MANSION
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	21 GRAMS
8 [illegible]	KUYA
9 [illegible]	TOTALLY BLOND
10 [illegible]	BONE SNATCHERS

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2 (DOLBY)	COLD MOUNTAIN
3 (DOLBY)	RUN AWAY JURY
4 (DOLBY)	KUYA

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2	HAUNTED MANSION
3	MILAN

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1	MILAN
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3	HAUNTED MANSION COLD MOUNTAIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
5	

METROPOLIS star
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2	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
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5	HAUNTED MANSION
6	RUNAWAY JURY

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1	MILAN
2	
3	
4	

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5	RESERVE
6	
7 (DTS)	
8 (SDDS)	
9 (DOLBY)	

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1	KUYA
2	MILAN
3	MILAN
4 (SDDS)	COLD MOUNTAIN
5	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
6 (DOLBY)	HAUNTED MANSION
7 (DTS)	WISHING STAIRS
8	PURI
9	IN THE CUT

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1	RESERVE
2 (SDDS)	
3 (DTS)	
4 (DOLBY)	
5	

Gotesco Ortigas
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2	MILAN
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5 (SDDS)	HAUNTED MANSION

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3	COLD MOUNTAIN
4	RESERVE

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5	MILAN

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6	HAUNTED OFFICE
7	CHASING LIBERTY

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4	IN THE CUT

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3 (DOLBY)	HAUNTED MANSION
4 (DTS)	COLD MOUNTAIN

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4 (DTS)	IN THE CUT

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1	KUYA
2	COLD MOUNTAIN
3 (DTS)	MILAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1	MILAN
2 (DTS)	KUYA
3 (DOLBY)	COLD MOUNTAIN
4	WISHING STAIR

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
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1	MILAN
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3 (DTS)	KUYA
4	WISHING STAIR

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
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1	BROTHER BEAR
2	MILAN
3 (DOLBY)	DIABLO

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1	MONA LIZA
2	MILAN
3 (DOLBY)	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASACRE
4 (DTS)	IN THE CUT

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1	CHASING LIBERTY
2	MILAN
3	KUYA

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2	IN THE CUT
3	KUYA
4 (DTS)	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

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2	KUYA
3 (DTS)	MILAN
4	WISHING STAIRS
5	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

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1	KUYA
2	MILAN

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1	KUYA
2	MILAN
3	COLD MOUNTAIN

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2	MONA LIZA
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1 (DTS)	RESERVE

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2	MONA LIZA
3	CHASING LIBERTY
4	MILAN

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1	KUYA
2	MILAN

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NOW SHOWING

HIGHLY DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

NHMFC to bid out ₱14B in home loans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GOVERNMENT-OWNED National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. (NHMFC) will push through with the sale of P13.8 billion worth of "highly delinquent" housing loans through a bidding to be held today.

The auction is expected to be participated by four foreign investment banks. The names of the prospective bidders were withheld due to a confidentiality agreement but INQUIRER sources named the four as Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Lone Star and Lehman Brothers. The four have registered for the bidding, the same sources added.

Dale Strickland, managing director of Ernst & Young Asia Pacific Financial Solutions LLC—who led the restructuring of the delinquent loans—however declined to confirm whether these were really the four interested investors.

But Strickland said some of the interested parties were in talks with other groups to form consortia that would eventually manage the loan portfolio.

Of the P13.8 billion worth of delinquent loans, about 85 percent is owed to private pension fund Social Security System (SSS) and 15 percent to the Home Development Mutual Fund, more popularly known as the Pag-Ibig Fund.

A chunk or 55 percent of the loans up for disposal include those whose borrowers missed scheduled payments. Some 30 percent represent those whose owners moved into their respective houses provided under the housing program but did not make payment over the duration of the 15-year loan term. The remaining 15 percent of the loans are those whose homes were abandoned.

Each of the prospective bidder paid US$30,000 as registration fee to cover auction costs, among others.

The winning bidder and NHMFC will form a special purpose entity that will manage the loans. This entity will not be availing itself of the tax perks provided by the special purpose vehicle (SPV) law.

The winning bidder will be declared this afternoon at 3 p.m.

The NHMFC had to adopt a rehabilitation plan in 1996 when it began falling behind in paying its funders—the SSS, the HDMF and the government pension fund Government Service Insurance System (GSIS). Under the rehabilitation plan drawn up with the help of financial advisers, the NHMFC divided its Unified Home Lending Program worth roughly P40 billion into three categories: "highly delinquent," "moderately delinquent" and "current."

The "highly delinquent" loans will be the first to be sold while the "moderately delinquent" will be restructured. The "current" loans will be securitized.

BSP relaxes rules on SPVs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has relaxed the rules governing special purpose asset vehicles (SPVs), to speed up the sale of the banking sector non-performing assets.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday told reporters that the policy-making Monetary Board had approved the relaxation of the SPV guidelines. With the move, he said banks should no longer have any excuse in holding on to their NPAs.

The new guidelines, contained in a BSP memorandum dated Feb. 19, recognize that banks and financial institutions "may need temporary regulatory relief, in addition to tax relief under the SPV Law, particularly in the timing of recognition of losses, so that they may be encouraged to maximize the sale of their NPAs even at substantial discounts."

The new guidelines allow the banks to retain a portion of the proceeds from an SPV transaction as reserves without declaring them as income. Under the previous implementing rules, banks are required to book specific provisions equivalent to the net book value of assets put up for sale.

Also, the BSP will now allow banks to declare cash dividends after they have booked their losses. The old rules did not allow the declaration of dividends if they failed to post a surplus after booking the losses.

The new provision is aimed at making the banks attractive to investors.

"The dividend is a way by which investors get compensated. Investors will have no interest in banks if they will not get dividends," BSP assistant governor Nestor Espenilla explained.

The new guidelines also allow the staggered booking of provisions for ten years, instead of seven years as provided in the old rule.

At present, the BSP is processing applications from nine banks seeking to transfer P6.44 billion worth of NPAs to SPVs.

The SPV Law, which took effect in April last year, intends to help banks get rid of their NPAs by waiving some of the taxes and reducing the fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets. The law waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax). It likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

The tax breaks and the other benefits are available only up to April 8, 2005.

The Bankers Association of the Philippines proposed the relaxation of the SPV guidelines to encourage the banks to be more aggressive in selling their NPAs.

No bank has so far made any bulk sale of assets to an SPV since the law was enacted. Others have chosen to reduce their NPAs through dacion en pago (asset swaps).

Pampanga's Best tocino is Pampanga's pride

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—It was 1965 and 28-year-old Lolita Hizon, a teacher at San Fernando Elementary School, was in dire financial straits.

Her three children's milk can was almost empty. Her husband Angelo, who was still working his way through college, needed more money for tuition. Their bills were piling up.

Fast forward to 2004: Hizon's meat-processing company, Pampanga's Best, has a 31-hectare factory, more than 800 employees, over 1,000 retail outlets all over Luzon, at least 5,000 dealers, 12 hands-on executives (actually her 12 grown-up children) and a number of industry awards for best practice.

What happened in those 39 years was an example of remarkable entrepreneurship, hinged on a pioneering product called *tocino*, processed pork slices that tasted like ham.

Hizon told the INQUIRER that it was the need to provide for her growing family and "guilt" that pushed her to give up her teaching and turn to business.

Turning point

"I realized that what I was doing was not right (not teaching well because of preoccupation with problems). One Friday, I went to confession and felt very sorry. I said 'I cheated my employer, I was not rightful of my salary and I was negligent of my duty,'" recalled Hizon.

"And so I prayed, 'Lord, please change my occupation, give me a job where I would be truly rightful of my salary,'" she said.

Hizon believed her prayers were answered when Angelo went into the trucking business in 1966.

While Angelo managed seven trucks from a service station in San Matias, just outside this city, Hizon put up a canteen.

In between cooking and serving sandwiches and coffee to drivers, she cared for her children, already five by then, at the canteen.

The following year proved to be auspicious, as she "accidentally" discovered *tocino*, her trademark product.

Trademark

It started when she ordered more pork to help out her meat supplier. Since she had more pork than the canteen needed, she had to preserve the rest of the meat. She did it in the old way favored by residents of her hometown in Bacolor where meat is preserved through fermenting.

"Pindang" or "burung babi" was how the old folks called it.

Pampanga's BEST
TOCINO·LONGANIZA

ANGELO and Lolita Hizon

She placed about 20 kilograms of meat and ingredients in a basin, mixed them well and set the basin aside to do her other duties. She got caught up in her activities that she left the meat to marinate longer than she intended. She initially feared that the meat was spoiled, but what turned out was tenderized meat with a sweet, salty taste.

She called it *tocino*, adopting the term that her half-Spanish aunt used to refer to any viand with sugar and salt. And it became a part of the menu in her canteen.

SUCCESS STORY

Disasters

The same *tocino* helped the Hizon family survive twin disasters. After the massive floods in Central and Northern Luzon in 1972, Angelo's trucking business went bankrupt and so did their canteen.

"Practically nothing was left for us," she said.

As if these were not enough, the couple was sued for defaulting on debts acquired for the trucking business.

Hizon again drew strength from prayers. And God again did not let her down.

Her answer came in the form of her neighbor, vendor Asiang David, whom she saw carrying about 5 kilogram of unsold pork on her way home.

From her laundry room, Hizon offered to help David by turning the meat into *tocino*. It took some convincing, but David eventually gave her the meat.

Hizon left all babysitting tasks to Angelo that day. In her unfinished kitchen, she prepared the tocino using her 1967 formula.

The next day, David brought the *tocino* to the old public market, this time neatly wrapped in clear plastic bags weighing about half a kilogram per bag. It competed with the traditional pindang, which also tasted sweet but was oily and tough.

David's sales pitch, as suggested by Hizon, was: "It's a different kind of *pindang*."

David ended the day with orders for 50 kg more of tocino. So she went back to Hizon to make some more.

The new item caught the fancy of other pork meat dealers. At David's stall, they got a taste of the cooked *tocino*.

"*Lasang hamon. Iba ito* (This tastes like ham. This is different)," Hizon recalled of the feedback from consumers.

And David promoted her friend's product, calling it "Lolita Hizon's Tocino."

"Pretty soon, almost all the meat dealers were selling my *tocino*," she said, adding there was no problem marketing it.

3-member team

Starting with just a team of three—herself, Angelo and a helper—the workforce grew to 10 and then to 50 as market demand increased.

Hizon never stopped improving on the product. In place of water, she used 7-Up. Soon after, she replaced it with pineapple juice.

By 1974, other entrepreneurs tried to imitate her product. Hizon, thus, came up with a brand name to distinguish her product.

"We had to be identified. At the floor of our still unfinished house, I thought of a very good name that would stand out. I wanted the product to appear like it's the best in Pampanga," she said.

Finally, her *tocino* was registered as "Pampanga's Best."

Later, she developed more products like *longganisa* (native sausage), ham, bacon and hotdogs.

She said she not only ensured quality, but considered the health of her products' buyers. In time, she removed salitre from the ingredients.

Another challenge

Pampanga's Best survived tough competition and major challenges such as the Mt. Pinatubo's eruption in 1991.

The company recovered and built its new factory in Barangay Macabacle in Bacolor without borrowing from the bank but *lahar* buried at least P30 million worth of building and new equipment in 1995.

The new plant was just four months in operation when tragedy struck.

Those were the "darkest days" of the company, but Hizon said the entire family "remained cool and did not complain."

Pampanga's Best resumed operations a year later in Magalang town, away from Hizon's hometown of Bacolor.

Even as it run the plant at full capacity, production failed to cope with the demand, she said. This led to their decision to put up a bigger factory here. Construction began in 2001.

This year, Pampanga's Best is centralizing all its operations, including retail, in the new plant.

Providential

"Everything is providential. Our life on earth is with a purpose. You have to comply with God's plan, do His will in order to be happy and successful. That is the key," Hizon said when asked how she steered the company to success.

Honesty and charity toward workers and the communities top the Hizons' list of personal and corporate values.

"One should not be afraid to take risks. You have to be versatile, to learn from circumstances," she said.

Three years ago, the Philippine Marketing Association hailed Hizon as the outstanding entrepreneur for medium-scale business, and she is happy to share what she has learned to other entrepreneurs. In this way, she did not stop being a teacher. She also fulfilled her promise to God to help the less fortunate.

Hizon established the Ing Bayung Cabalantian (The New Cabalantian) Foundation to share her blessings and help uplift the lives of others. It helped put up schools, gave educational scholarships, cared for senior citizens and conducted feeding missions.

But Angelo, her husband of 44 years, is, in Hizon's words, the "force beneath my wings."

"Even if you perceive me as a strong woman, you take him out and I'm helpless," Hizon said.

COURTESY CALL FROM THE EMERALD ISLE
Irish eyes smiled on The INQUIRER when Irish Ambassador Hugh Swift (fourth from left), along with wife Maire and Consul General Noreen Trota, visited INQUIRER's Makati office recently. INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot and president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez welcomed Ambassador Swift and his party.

BIR to appeal Mandaue court ruling

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is set to appeal a court ruling that declared as unconstitutional the revenue regulation subjecting to tax reclassification new cigarette brands.

The BIR said the ruling, issued by the Mandaue City Regional Trial Court on Feb. 13, was a big blow to the government's efforts to increase revenue collection, and reduce the country's budget deficit.

Deputy Revenue Commissioner Kim Henares said the BIR would bring the matter to the Office of the Solicitor General, which will represent the BIR in a move to file a motion for reconsideration with the Mandaue RTC.

The Mandaue RTC ruled that Revenue Regulation No. 22-2003 was unconstitutional because it was against the principle of equity in taxation.

RR No. 22-2003 subjects only new cigarette brands, or those that were introduced in the market after 1996, to tax reclassification. Manufacturers of new cigarette brands, such as La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory, said the revenue regulation was unfair because it made their products more expensive than the old brands of the same prices.

The Mandaue RTC made the decision in response to a complaint filed by a certain Cesar Torrefranca, a regular cigarette buyer.

The implementation of RR 22-2003 adjusted the tax imposed on La Suerte's Astro and Memphis from P1.12 to P5.60 per pack. The reclassification followed a market survey conducted by the BIR that revealed that the net retail price.of Astro and Memphis should fall under the tax bracket of P5.60 per pack.

The revenue agency cannot issue a revenue regulation subjecting to tax reclassification old cigarette brands. This is because the revised Tax Code, which was adopted in 1997, provided fix rates to be imposed on brands that were already existing at that time.

Only legislation on the indexation of the excise tax on sin products will allow the BIR to reclassify old cigarette brands.

Congress failed to pass any of the pending bills on indexation before it went on recess on Feb. 6.

The BIR said that while the proposed indexation was not acted upon, the BIR would pursue the implementation of RR No. 22-2003 to continue collecting the much-needed additional revenue. The regulation will raise for the government about P1.6 billion in additional revenue.

Henares said that with the appeal, the BIR might still collect the additional taxes accruing from the revenue regulation. She added that the revenue agency could only be barred from implementing RR 22-2203 when the BIR's appeal is acted upon.

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Oatmeal as food for the heart /D1

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MONDAY **ARTS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ● SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

Fitness should be fun for young people

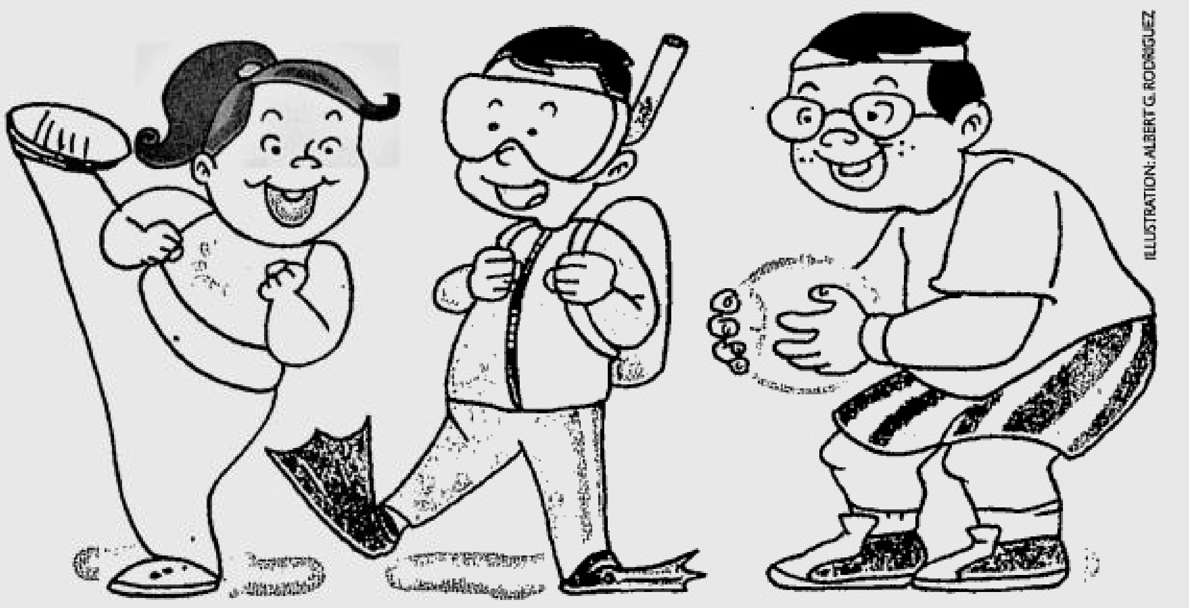


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

WHEN Clarissa Pascual of St. Scholastica's College invited me to the opening of the thesis exhibition of her advertising class, I accepted for two reasons.

The first was that I studied in St. Scho for my first year of college. That year was memorable for me because I finally conquered my bulimia and started down the road to sensible eating and exercising. The second reason was the topic of the exhibit, something dear to my heart.

Gamers or Great Adventures in Modern Exercises, Recreations and Sports was how Clarissa and her classmates called their imaginary advocacy campaign, which aimed to encourage the youth and young adults to get fit, relieve stress, build self-esteem, and prevent negative behavior like drug addiction through physical activity.

The thesis statement said in part, "What if the PSC [Philippine Sports Commission], as part of [its] social responsibility and response to promote peace through constructive activism, decided to capitalize on the popularity of modern exercises, recreations and sports, and to create awareness to introduce it as an alternative interest, to gain more beneficial and intangible results other than physical fitness and health for the youth and young adults? What if these enjoyable recreations, games and sports were used to help curb the negative excesses and influences to which the youth and young adults today are so prone and exposed to abuse, to experiment with, and later on, be addicted to?"

Focus on other things

There were two main things I liked about the thesis project. First, I liked the way they focused on the "other" things that physical activity could do for young people, like building self-esteem and confidence.

Second, I liked the fact that they gave equal importance to "modern exercises" (Taebo, Pilates, aerobics, spinning, yoga) and "recreations" (camping, mountain-climbing and scuba-diving) as well as sports.

This was a holistic approach because it offered a wide range of activities for all kinds of young people.

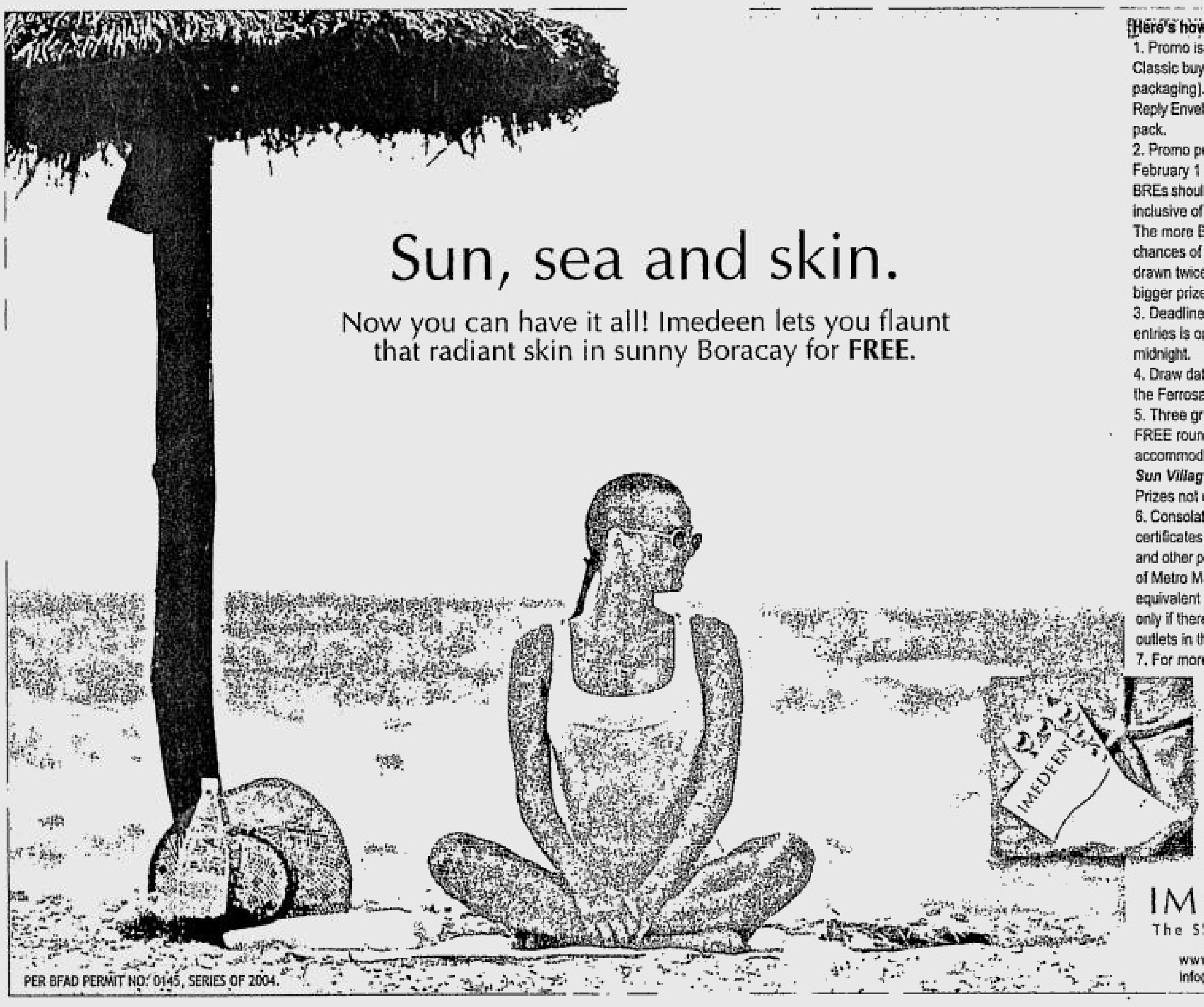
Not everyone is athletic and not everyone enjoys the challenge of competition in sports. Most kids just want to have fun.

When there is too much emphasis on the growing years on competitive sports, the nonathletes or less-skilled children get left by the wayside and may get so turned off with anything physical that they become sedentary adults.

Even the highly athletic kids lose out if they participate only in a specific team or individual sport.

Chuck Corbin, a professor of exercise science at Arizona State University, told Ace Fitness Matters magazine, "Many kids grow up with team sports only to become sedentary spectators in adulthood."

FITNESS/ C3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4. Draw date is on April 12, 2004 at the Ferrosan office in Makati.
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6. Consolation prizes include 14 gift certificates for beauty treatments and other products. Winners outside of Metro Manila will get the cash equivalent of the consolation prize only if there are no participating outlets in the area.
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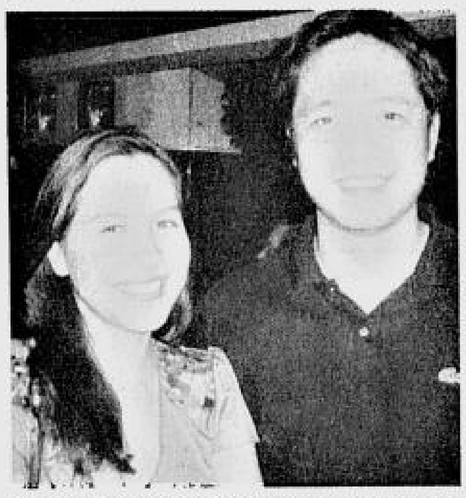


BRIDE-TO-BE Jackie Cohen and pal Scott Hu

SISTERS ACT. Jessica and Wendy Puyat

Fun and feasting in the heart of Mindanao

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

ONE of the very best fiestas of this country has just started, *palanggas.* Kaamulan, Bukidnon's yearly festival, which runs from Feb. 23 to March 13, brings together the seven ethnic tribes of the province to celebrate Bukidnon's Foundation Day.

The fiesta presents a gorgeous display of fabulous colors and the customs and traditions of the seven tribes.

There are other exciting activities, such as the agri-fair, super garden show, a much-awaited foodfest, and the livestock show, where the ostrich, sheep, horses, buffalo and many others are displayed.

There's also a rodeo and horse fight, which showcases Bukidnon's claim to fame as the local horse country.

Next is the ethnic sportsfest where interesting games are played, such as fire-building, rice pounding and winnowing, archery, spear throwing and tug-of-war.

One of the festival's highlights is the "Evening of Bukidnon Dances," a preview of the colorful ethnic street-dancing competition that will be held the next day.

Other games to see include the Kaamulan motocross, a shootfest and the amateur golf tournament.

Of course, the festivities would not be complete without the must-see horse show, where horsemen from the city of Malaybalay do various formations to the tune of ethnic and cowboy music.

The festival will be capped by a civic-military parade and a dazzling 20-minute display of fireworks, compliments of Bukidnon's third-district congressman, **Juan Miguel F. Zubiri.**

Kaamulan was envisioned by the province's popular governor, **Jose Ma. "Joe" R. Zubiri Jr.** , as a grand event where visitors and locals alike can enjoy Bukidnon's rich heritage and culture.

Check out this fascinating one-of-a-kind happening, *palanggas*. The main events of the festivities will be on March 4-7.

Seeing red

Red seems to be everywhere these days—in vogue lipstick, Chinese New Year, Valentine, Makati Shangri-La's hip new restaurant called—what else?—Red, and now, the card that should be in any stylish woman's handbag, HSBC Red MasterCard!

The card's launching saw Manille's cosmo crowd trooping to the swinging Temple Bar in Greenbelt 2. The place was crawling with corporate VIPs, über models, media persons and urbane guests.

They were joined by HSBC Red MasterCard's five designated icons: Cartwheel Philippines founder **Gina Alfonso**; capoeirista **Cookie Duran**; VJ/model **Amanda Griffin**; traffic-stopping style chameleon **Tessa Prieto Valdes**; and talented chef **Melissa Sison.**

The Whiplash dancers started the ball rolling with a sensual dance, followed by a powerful vocal performance by that ascendant diva, **Bituin Escalante** , in a red-hot halter dress.

An exciting fashion show participated in by choice PMAP models was also held. The featured merchandise came exclusively from Stores Specialists Inc., which has a fabulous tie-up with HSBC Red MasterCard for all of you, *palanggas.*

Mind you, SSI's stores include Prada, Gucci and Tod's. Oo-lala...

It was crystal-clear, dahlings, that there was only one thing in women's minds that evening—mega-shop with the HSBC Red MasterCard. My pal Tessa Prieto V. was heard exclaiming, "I love it!"

Birthday whirl

The week opened with a bang as a number of Manille's scenesters celebrated their birthdays in a whirlwind of parties, dinners and fun nights out.

Shu Uemura's **Tina Tinio**'s natal day was the first to come, and since she was turning 30 (a "milestone," she called it), the birthday girl decided to celebrate in a big way at Azzurro Bar at the Sommerset Millenium. The theme? "Tina Gone Wild."

And wild everybody got, as Tina's numerous pals came in droves to party with her. The booze flowed so freely that, rumors have it, several invitees had to be carried home literally! Oops.

Less than a week after, none other than **Tim Yap** celebrated his birthday, followed by talented interior designer and events organizer **Miguel Rosales** a day later.

While both refused to disclose their ages, they didn't forget to mark their days in a fab way by hosting several dinner parties and even a karaoke night at new hotspot Red Box in Greenbelt 3. The last one was hosted by young worldly gent **Patrick Reyno**, *palanggas.*

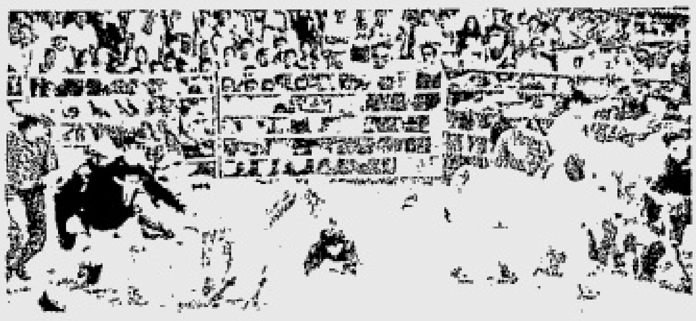
Since Tina, Tim and Miguel were close pals, their gangmate, style maven **Celine Lopez**, capped the week-long festivities by hosting her own dinner for the three celebrators.

Held at her *tres* chic pad, Celine's dinner was a casual and real fun affair, with everyone sitting al fresco on the huge patio of her penthouse apartment while enjoying the Makati skyline.

There was yummy home-cooked food, prepared with some help from **Trish Cu-Unjieng**, who does the best salad and salad dressings this side of heaven, plus an endless flow of rich Portuguese wines. It was the perfect way to end a week's worth of birthday parties by today's swingers.

Those who had a great time at Celine's bash were beautiful couple **Wendy** and **Tony Hotung**; super coosome twosome **Angelique Villaraza** and **Joel Ong**; Tina Tinio's man **Lex Ledesma**; vivacious **Jessica Puyat**; **Chut Cuerva**; **Ipe Cruz**; fun **Joji Dingcong**; Patrick Reyno, always with a great laugh; night owl **Pepper Teehankee**; soon-to-be-married **Marco Antonio** and **Jackie Cohen** (but not to each other, silly); **Manny del Rosario**; **Philip Cu-Unjieng**; **Raj Moreno**; **Carlo Antonio**; **Leica Carpo**; gorgeous **Kitty Jacinto**; **Malu Gamboa**; **Toni Leviste**; **DJ Montano**; young married lovebirds **Gippy Tantoco** and **Hindy Weber T.**, plus many more of Cosmo Manille's great scenesters.

ONE OF BUKIDNON'S colorfully-garbed ethnic tribes



THE EXCITING rodeo round-up held during Bukidnon's fiesta

Bukidnon's Kaamulan Festival displays the rich colors and flavors of the province's unique culture

THE GANG OF FOUR. Celebrators Miguel Rosales, Tina Tinio and Tim Yap, with host Celine Lopez

SOUTHERN gent Alex Ledesma, restaurateur DJ Montano, Chut Cuerva and Angelique Villaraza

RED-HOT WOMEN. Melissa Sison, Amanda Griffin, Cookie Duran, Tessa Prieto Valdes, Julie Manning and Gina Alfonso

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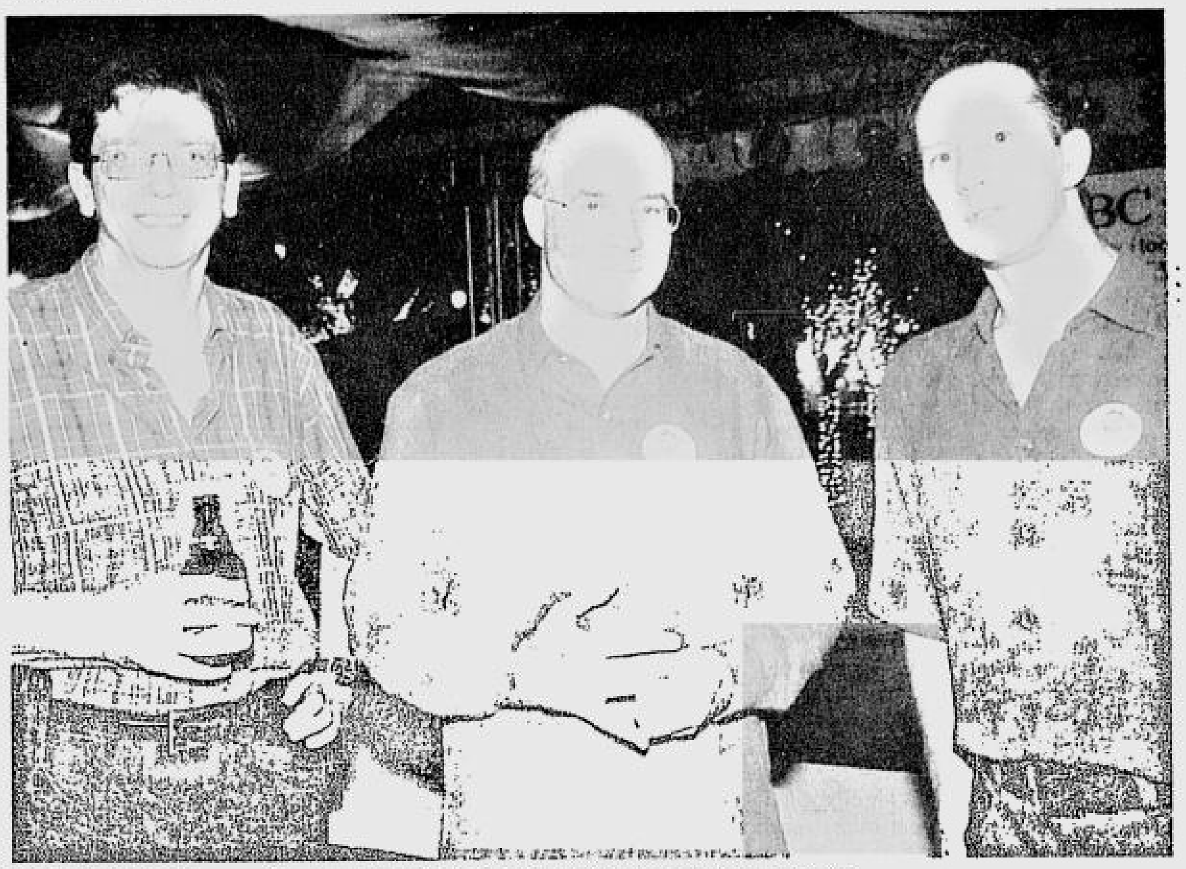

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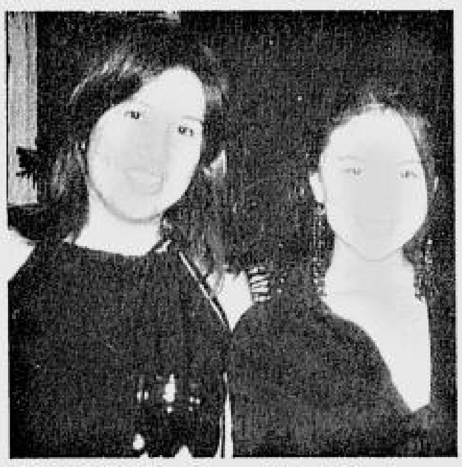

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Since Tina, Tim and Miguel were close pals, their gangmate, style maven **Celine Lopez**, capped the week-long festivities by hosting her own dinner for the three celebrators.

Held at her *tres* chic pad, Celine's dinner was a casual and real fun affair, with everyone sitting al fresco on the huge patio of her penthouse apartment while enjoying the Makati skyline.

There was yummy home-cooked food, prepared with some help from **Trish Cu-Unjieng**, who does the best salad and salad dressings this side of heaven, plus an endless flow of rich Portuguese wines. It was the perfect way to end a week's worth of birthday parties by today's swingers.

Those who had a great time at Celine's bash were beautiful couple **Wendy** and **Tony Hotung**; super coosome twosome **Angelique Villaraza** and **Joel Ong**; Tina Tinio's man **Lex Ledesma**; vivacious **Jessica Puyat**; **Chut Cuerva**; **Ipe Cruz**; fun **Joji Dingcong**; Patrick Reyno, always with a great laugh; night owl **Pepper Teehankee**; soon-to-be-married **Marco Antonio** and **Jackie Cohen** (but not to each other, silly); **Manny del Rosario**; **Philip Cu-Unjieng**; **Raj Moreno**; **Carlo Antonio**; **Leica Carpo**; gorgeous **Kitty Jacinto**; **Malu Gamboa**; **Toni Leviste**; **DJ Montano**; young married lovebirds **Gippy Tantoco** and **Hindy Weber T.**, plus many more of Cosmo Manille's great scenesters.

Bukidnon's Kaamulan Festival displays the rich colors and flavors of the province's unique culture

ONE OF BUKIDNON'S colorfully-garbed ethnic tribes

THE EXCITING rodeo round-up held during Bukidnon's fiesta

THE GANG OF FOUR. Celebrators Miguel Rosales, Tina Tinio and Tim Yap, with host Celine Lopez

SOUTHERN gent Alex Ledesma, restaurateur DJ Montano, Chut Cuerva and Angelique Villaraza

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Fitness should be fun . . .

From page C1

Overweight sports buffs

True enough, for all the importance that Americans place on Little League sports like baseball, basketball and soccer, the country is still experiencing an increase in overweight and obesity levels. In an article for ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal, Dr. Avery Faigenbaum writes, "...involvement in team sports may be difficult to carry over into adulthood."

This observation makes sense. If the only sport you play is basketball or soccer, it becomes harder and harder to gather teammates to play with as a young working adult and it becomes downright impossible to find 40-year-old playmates when you become middle-aged.

The result is an ex-jock who proudly remembers his days of glory as the most valuable player of the year but who today is an unfit couch potato with a big belly.

The solution for lifelong fitness participation is for kids to be introduced to lifetime fitness activities like running, swimming, biking, hiking, as well as competitive individual or team sports.

But before anything else, they need to learn fundamental-movement skills like throwing, catching, kicking, bending, pushing, jumping (knowing how to land properly is even more important), and various movement patterns (lateral, diagonal, zigzag), because these skills will successfully translate into a variety of exercises, recreations and sports.

When too much emphasis is placed too early only on the specific skills of a particular sport, children grow up with a limited repertoire of athletic and movement skills.

Early start, early end

It is a myth that if you want to develop an athletic superstar, your child should start specialized sports training as soon as she/he can walk. Even the former Soviet Union and East Germany now recognize that children who start intensive sports specialization at 10 years old or younger have shorter athletic careers compared to kids who start at 12-13 years old.

Last year, at the "Innovations in Sports Conditioning" seminar that I attended at the Idea World Fitness Convention in Anaheim, California, sports specialist Peter Twist mentioned research proving that starting specialized skills training at a very young age was the least successful way to produce adult sports stars.

Burnout, injury and limited physical skills could be the result of over-enthusiastic parents and coaches pushing young children into intensive sports-specific training. Twist emphasized that the best athletes were well-rounded individuals with a large range of athletic skills.

Playing favorites

Schools can also place too much emphasis on varsity athletes to the detriment of the physical education program for the rest of the student population. In some schools, the varsity department eats up most of the budget leaving little for the PE program. Even among varsity sports, there can be discrimination against less popular sports.

In one private school in the Philippines, 90 percent of the varsity budget was reserved for the men's basketball team. The rest of the sports (for both male and female athletes) had to make do with the remaining 10 percent.

It's true that competition is a natural part of life but young kids in Little League sports do not need to be pushed into fierce competition that the less-skilled children spend most of the season warming the bench while only the "best" get to play most of the time. The objective of these events should be for kids to learn how to enjoy playing the sport.

Sports psychologist Joe Gruber points out, "Studies of children in team sports find that most kids would rather play for a losing team that has fun than warm the bench on a winning team."

According to Gary Seibert, a consultant in youth fitness and recreation, children need non-competitive, non-threatening activities that allow them to socially interact with other children, learn the basic skills of a variety of team, individual, and lifetime sports or recreational activities, develop self-esteem and self-worth, and, most of all, have fun.

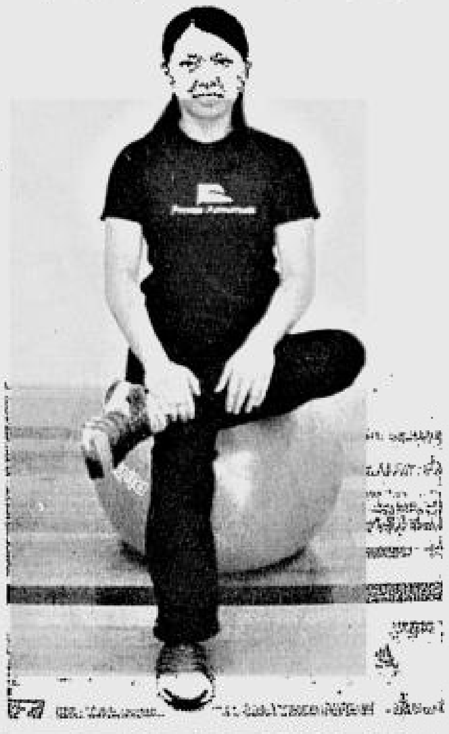
The fun aspect is what keeps children and young adults interested in participating in fitness activities. When it is no longer fun, children drop out. As Siebert notes, "baseball is not as much fun if you get nervous every time you get up to bat" because you are scared of disappointing your team and your gung-ho parent.

The Gamers concept of "modern exercises, recreations and sports" is summed up quite nicely by Siebert in his article "Recreation versus Sports Programs for Kids" for Fitness Management Magazine: "Remember, not everyone has the ability, will, or desire to participate in a team sport. It takes discipline, hard work and a team effort to make the grade. By the same token, you don't have to go out for a team sport to learn the benefits of discipline, hard work and a team effort. Our ultimate goal is to help children, and, therefore, we need to provide as many alternatives as possible to help today's children develop into happy, healthy adults."

For past articles and exercises or to suggest future topics, go to www.tinajuanfitness.info.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Seated figure-4 stretch on stability ball



THIS exercise stretches the muscles of the buttocks as well as opens up the hip joint. It also challenges the core muscles of the trunk because of the unstable surface of the ball.

Equipment:

Stability ball. As a substitute, you can use a chair or the edge of a bed.

Exercise technique:

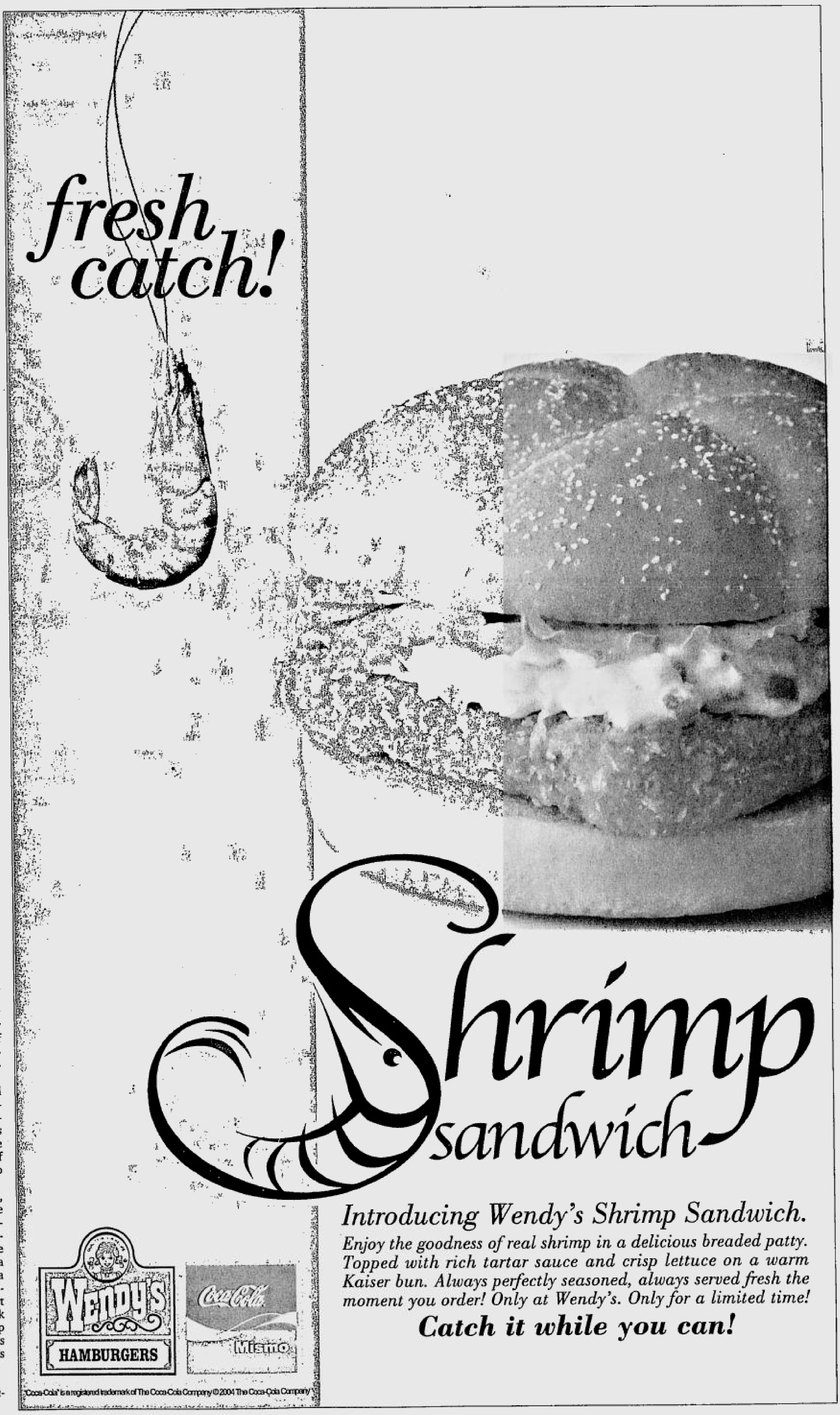
1. Sit on the ball with your feet together on the floor. Stabilize and center yourself as you cross one leg over the other by putting the ankle across the thigh.
2. Hold the ball at the sides or hold your leg.
3. Hold the stretch for the desired length of time, then repeat on the other side.

Performance tips:

1. To do this exercise safely, open up from the hip joint. Do not force your knee downward. Your knee can only go as far as the hip joint will open.
2. For advanced exercisers, you can lean forward from the hips while keeping your back straight to increase the stretch in the buttocks.
3. Another alternative to increase the balance challenge is to place your hands in a prayer position in the middle of your chest or bring your arms up overhead.

Repetitions:

Hold for 10-20 seconds. Do once or twice.



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'Up-lifting' talk with cosmetic surgeon

Surgery may be necessary to improve one's appearance and boost self-confidence

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

IT was one of those no holds-barred conversations. No time for pretense or masquerades. Just the plain, honest-to-goodness truth.

Here are answers to readers' questions from an experienced cosmetic surgeon, Dr. Raul Guanzon, diplomate Philippine Board of Cosmetic Surgery, member Philippine Society of Cosmetic Surgery and American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery.

Is cosmetic surgery a necessity? In cases where there are natural deformities or damage to one's features caused by accidents, it is necessary to undergo surgery to restore or improve not only one's face or appearance but also to boost one's self-confidence and body image.

Should women and men resort to cosmetic procedures to look better? It depends on one's outlook. Some can age as gracefully as they want to by using procedures that are non-surgical. Options available include:

IPL or Intense Pulse Light is a treatment involving the use of light to restore the collagen of one's skin, erase fine lines and wrinkles, remove skin blemishes/discolorations and freckles. With just six painless treatments for a month, the face acquires a noticeable glow and natural lift.

Tissue fillers like Resty Lane (from hyaluronic acid, imported from Sweden) and New Fill (lactic acid from the United States) can be injected to tuck in sagging parts of the face and especially to repair deep facial lines. The results are temporary—six months to one year with Resty Lane and three years for New Fill. Hydrogel injections on the face to plump up the cheeks are not advisable because the substance hardens in time.

Botox, a serum which temporarily (three to four months) paralyzes the muscles in certain areas of the face like the forehead, around the eyes, between the eyebrows—results in fewer wrinkles and makes deep facial lines disappear.

Surgical procedures can range from liposuction, which can now shape just about any part of the face or body; face-lift eye surgery (blepharoplasty) which, minor as it may seem, offers the most dramatic change; nose repair (rhinoplasties), which can be done without fracturing the bone.

Can a good cosmetic surgeon re-sculpt your face? Definitely. However, one must not undergo the procedure if he/she is not ready for the changes resulting from the operation. In short, you must be ready to accept that you will look younger.

A good face lift should only need a touch up after eight to 10 years. It depends on the quality of one's skin. (If you have abused your body with alcohol, over exposure to the sun and smoking, your skin may need a touch-up after five years because of the loss of collagen and elasticity.)

Today's face lift doesn't look as stretched any more because it now involves a more customized attention to each one's anatomy. There is more work underneath the skin by removing fat (if needed) and tightening the layers of muscle to give a more youthful look. Lifts can be "forehead" (incision behind the hairline), "temporal" (behind the hair line on the side of the face just before the ear), or "full," where a fine incision will be made in front of the ears.

Steph B.
ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Local anesthesia is used through an intravenous (IV) sedation. Usually an operation lasts two to three hours. Swelling is minimal (five to seven days). It also leaves no gap in the scalp and has minimal effect on hairline and hair growth. Recovery is 10-14 days for a full face lift.

Note: An interview with a female patient 24 hours after her temporal lift and eye bag removal was enlightening. She said she was not in pain, but only had a feeling of heaviness on the sides. On closer look, I saw that the incisions on the scalp and under the eyelids were fine and clean. She literally had no swelling. Even though she admitted to being 45 years old, she looked like she was in her mid-30s.

Can you recommend a natural way to age gracefully?

Eat a balanced diet. In short, everything in moderation. Good-looking skin is nourished by vegetables, fruits and lots of purified water. Avoid the sun (wear a sun block regularly, SPF 30), exercise three times a week, get enough sleep, take your vitamins and antioxidants (especially a multivitamin/mineral supplement, antioxidants—A, C, E, selenium, zinc, co-enzyme Q10, have a pleasant disposition.

Secret to beauty

People who are beautiful share a secret—they love themselves enough to have the determination and the discipline to succeed in their health and wellness goals. This love is founded firmly on the belief that to get the most out of life, one must be in top shape and should wear a bright smile.

Plus and minus

While it is possible to surgically turn back the clock, women and men should know that this is just one of the options open to them.

The key is to find the right cosmetic surgeon to treat your body and face with great skill and to handle your psychological reasons for doing so with understanding.

Cosmetic surgery can do many things. But there are also things it cannot do for you. While cosmetic surgery may enhance your looks, it certainly will not guarantee that you will be the most popular person in town. It may boost your self-confidence but true faith in one's self comes from within, not without.

Beauty affirmation

As you splash your face with cool water first thing in the morning, affirm: "Yes, I am beautiful inside and out."

Love and light!

Resource Person: Dr. Raul Guanzon, cosmetic surgeon, Rm. 301, Greenhills Mansion, Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan. Call 7224972; Rm. 202, Webjet Bldg., E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis QC. Call 6830448.

Announcement: Listen to "Ma-Beauty Po Naman," my new live beauty/wellness radio program on dzMM Radio Patrol, 630khz, 6 p.m.-7 p.m. every Sunday.

E-mail the author at coryquirino_fy@yahoo.com

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Healer is friends with 'kapre'

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

WHILE gathering materials for a book on dwarves, I also came across stories of encounters with other elementals or nature spirits such as *kapres* and *engkantos*.

Kapres are among the characters that inhabit Philippine folklore and mythology. They are not supposed to be real creatures, but are merely imaginary. But are they really mere figments of pre-industrial Filipino mind?

The typical description of a *kapre* is that he is a gigantic human-like male creature, about 10 to 12 feet in height, body and face covered with hair, lives in big trees like *caimito*, mango and *balete*, and smokes a big cigar. He is not usually known to be harmful, only mischievous and naughty.

The following is the interesting story of a healer's unusual encounter with a 12-foot *kapre* in Calinog, Iloilo about two hours' ride by car from the capital city.

Vicente Laruan, 86, is a well-known healer in the area. He has been performing healing since he was 12 years old, but did not fully accept his calling as a healer until much later in life when his only daughter was stricken with a respiratory disease which he alone was able to cure.

Reynaldo Daguman and Lisa Montero, both former students of mine, accompanied me on Monday, Jan. 26, to the sleepy town of Calinog where Vicente Laruan works as a farmer and heals the sick on the side. He heals by prescribing medicinal plants that the patient has to take internally or place externally on affected body parts.

While waiting for Mr. Laruan to arrive, his wife showed us copper and brass objects he found buried in the fields as he was tilling the soil. One was a covered jar, another a small statue of the Sto. Niño and another a kris-like knife. Only the cover of the copper jar was left because somebody had bought the jar. Mr. Laruan uses the objects in healing.

Another object he found in the fields was an odd-looking tree trunk. He used this for healing, too.

What got me interested in seeing Mang Vicente was his reputation for eating live or burning charcoal for breakfast without getting hurt. He also has a reputation of talking to *kapres* and *dwendes*.

When we were in his humble place, his 76-year-old wife served him, not a plate of rice and chicken but a cauldron of live charcoal. He ate a few live ones in front of us. Then he showed us his tongue which was not burned at all. He said he also walked on fire and even washed his feet, not with water, but with fire when coming from the fields. He just smiled as our faces must have shown our shock at the things he did.

Vicente makes a distinction between spirit-induced sickness and one that is physically caused. If he finds the ailment to be merely physical, he sends the patient to a medical doctor. He does not treat them. "I only treat diseases caused by bad spirits," he said.

What to me was the most fascinating story he told us was his encounters with a *kapre* in the fields. They had, in fact, become close friends and he was never afraid of him.

He was out in the field one evening when the *kapre* first appeared to him. The creature was tall, about 12 ft. in height because Vicente said his head was as high as the ceiling of his *nipa* house. His house is really big compared to ordinary houses.

One time, Vicente needed a match to light his cigaret. He saw the *kapre* smoking a cigar. The creature lighted Vicente's cigaret with his cigar. Vicente said he was then able to smoke his cigaret. Now, that's new to me. If *kapres* were not real, how come the healer's cigaret was lighted? And how come many people report smelling cigar smoke when a *kapre* is around?

I asked Vicente how the *kapre* looked and he said, "He is very tall, like a giant, full of hair all over his body." His cigar was not really bigger than what ordinary men smoked. Vicente said it's the same size. This demolishes most of the drawings of *kapres* with gigantic cigars.

How is he dressed? Vicente said the *kapre* was completely naked but his body and face were almost entirely covered with hair.

Then I asked curiously, "Since you see the *kapre* so close and completely naked, did you ever see the *kapre*'s genitals or organ?"

Vicente said, yes, of course. "It looks like any ordinary man's sexual organ," he said, matter of factly.

That was the first time I heard somebody say he saw the genitals of a *kapre*. After we left Calinog, I remembered something I failed to ask the healer about the *kapre*'s organ. I failed to ask if it was circumcised!

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati. Call 8107245 or 8926806. E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

Is it possible to enroll my newly adopted child?

If you are a group or corporate member, contact your HR Dept. immediately and complete all necessary forms required for enrollment of additional dependents. Forward these enrollment forms to us together with your child's adoption papers. For those under individual or family coverage, you must notify MEDICard of your intention in writing together with your child's adoption papers and corresponding enrollment fees. In both cases, do remember that there is a hierarchy of enrollment to be followed and that the inclusion of dependent must be accomplished within 30 days from the date of adoption.

Meet your MEDICard Team

One of MEDICard's first accredited doctors in Bacolod City is **Dr. Lolito Sta. Maria Tumbocon.** He is the Medical Coordinator for The Doctors' Hospital located in B.S. Aquino Drive. Doc Lolito began his medical career in 1962 after finishing Medicine at University of Santo Tomas. Later, he took specialization training for OB-Gynecology at St. Joseph Hospital in Negros Occidental and in various training hospitals in the USA. Doc, as his patients dub him, was a faculty member and junior consultant of the Dept. of OB-GYN at UST-Medicine and Surgery. He also held various key management positions in The Doctors' Hospital. For all members' needs at the hospital, visit the clinic of coordinator Dr. Lolito Tumbocon, Mondays to Saturdays during regular clinic hours at Room 139.

Contract Signing

IBM PHILIPPINES, INC., the single biggest information technology company in the world today in terms of product line, revenue & workforce signed recently the healthcare program agreement for its employees and dependents at the Manila Peninsula Hotel. (Seated L-R) Luis Montoya (MEDICard EVP & GM), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (MEDICard Pres.), Joaquin Quintos IV. (IBM GM), Anna Roqueza (IBM Mngr for HR & Staff Services) & Dr. Nicky Montoya (MEDICard Med. Dir). (Standing L-R) Miriam Villafuerte (MEDICard Mktg. Services Mngr.), Vera Llarena (IBM HR Professional), Pia Reyes (MEDICard Corp. Accounts Mngr.) & Analyn Antonio (IBM HR Professional).

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 812-8360, 817-5136 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

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TUESDAY **FITNESS**

JACQUELINE Bermas and Jocelyn Broncano (second and third from left), Smart Heart Challenge participants who registered the biggest drops in cholesterol levels, with Quaker Oats Asia executives Raymond Gerard Valenzuela, trade marketing manager, and Jagrut Kotecha, commercial director-Philippines. Also in photo is Dr. Rodolfo Florentino, medical consultant for the Smart Heart Challenge.

Smart food for the strong heart

A 30-day health program shows oatmeal helps reduce the risk of cardiac disease

By Gibbs Cadiz

IF YOU were offered a free bowl of oatmeal everyday for 30 days, would you take it?

If, on top of the free oatmeal, you are given a food stub worth P25 to be used as discount on your food purchases that day, would you grab the offer?

And if the free bowl comes with the promise of better health, new friends and the chance to make history, would you drop everything to be first in line?

At the Philippine Stock Exchange Center (Tektite Building) in Ortigas, 107 participants eagerly accepted the challenge. Ninety-four finished the program, and had glowing stories about their experiences.

Like a sponge

The program was called the "Smart Heart Challenge," and it was developed by Quaker Oats to demonstrate how oatmeal helped reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering the body's cholesterol levels.

"Oats have high soluble fiber that acts like a sponge," explains Dr. Rodolfo Florentino, chair-president of the Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines and health consultant to the program.

"The soluble fiber soaks up cholesterol-containing material in the digestive system and carries it out of the body before it can be absorbed," he adds.

This is not mere hype. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has allowed oatmeal and other foods rich in soluble fiber to claim that they "may lower the risk of heart disease" if taken with a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet.

It is the first health claim FDA has allowed on the label of a food product. Backing that decision is more than 37 scientific studies in the last 30 years on the beneficial effects of soluble foods.

"Oatmeal is one of the earliest foods recognized to have a functional property," says Dr. Florentino. "This means that in addition to the vitamins and minerals inherent in the food, there are other benefits such as its 'sponge'-like property to clean our system of harmful elements like cholesterol."

Exclusions

The Smart Heart Challenge ran Nov. 14-Dec. 15. Participants came from various offices in the Tektite Building. Sixty percent were women and 40 percent men, selected via a free but rigorous medical check-up conducted before the program started.

"We excluded those who were already taking medications for cholesterol, those with normal cholesterol levels (below 200 milligrams percent, or mg%), and those with overly high levels (above 300 mg%)," says Dr. Florentino.

SMART/D3

QUAKER
Oat Segera

THE US Food and Drug Administration has allowed Quaker Oats to carry a health claim on its label.

Gallery WALK

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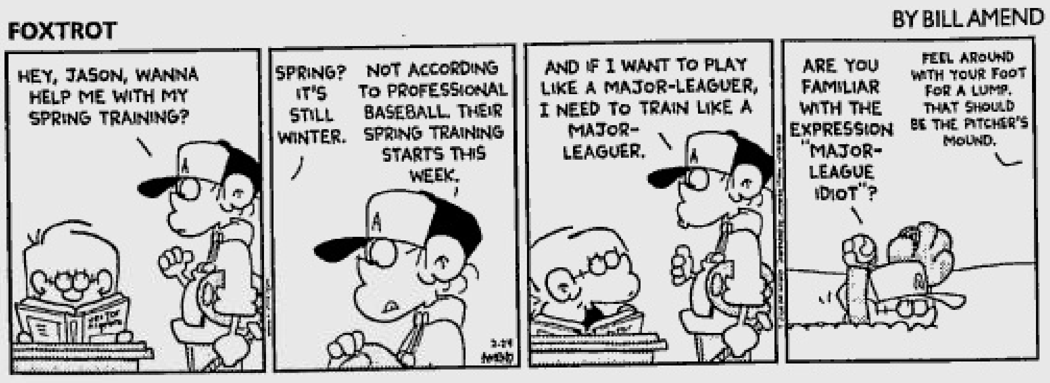
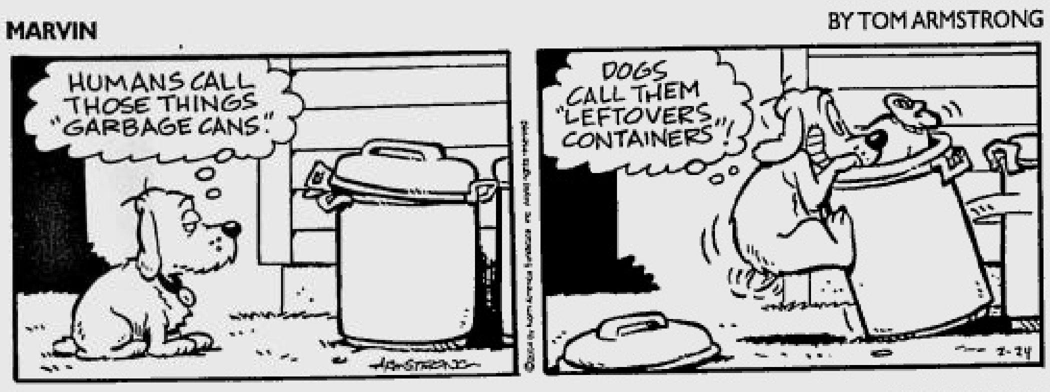
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HEY, JASON, WANNA HELP ME WITH MY SPRING TRAINING?
SPRING? IT'S STILL WINTER.
NOT ACCORDING TO PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL. THEIR SPRING TRAINING STARTS THIS WEEK.
AND IF I WANT TO PLAY LIKE A MAJOR-LEAGUER, I NEED TO TRAIN LIKE A MAJOR-LEAGUER.
ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE EXPRESSION "MAJOR-LEAGUE IDIOT"?
FEEL AROUND WITH YOUR FOOT FOR A LUMP. THAT SHOULD BE THE PITCHER'S MOUND.
2-24
AMEND

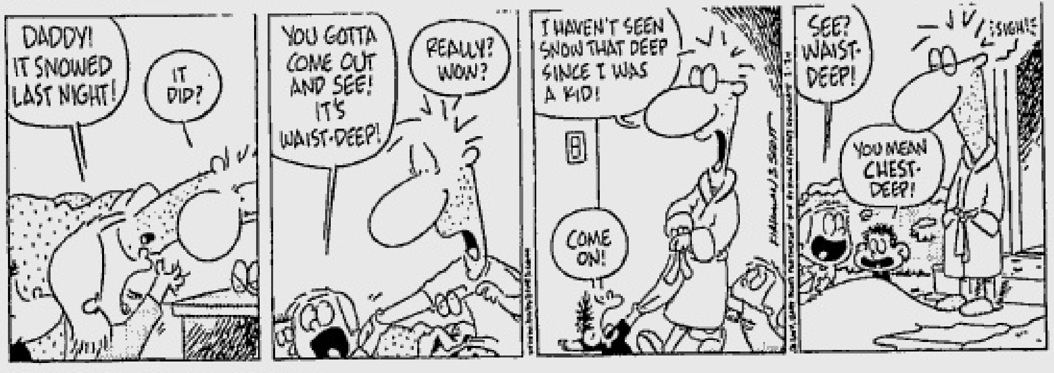
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HUMANS CALL THOSE THINGS "GARBAGE CANS."
DOGS CALL THEM "LEFTOVERS CONTAINERS"!
ARMSTRONG
2-24

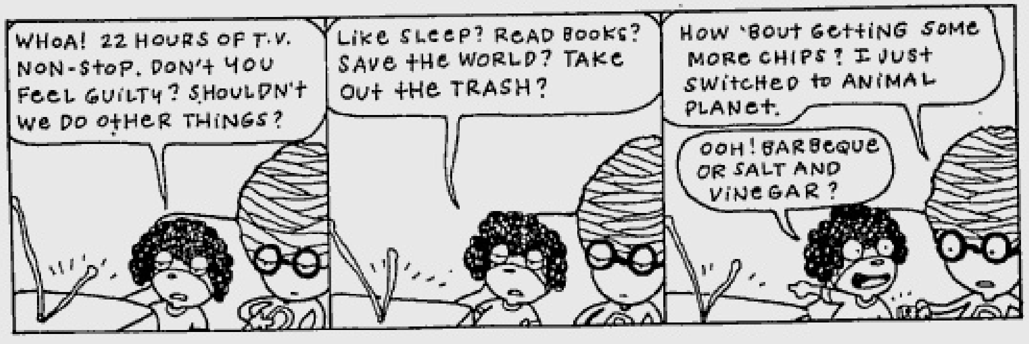
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DADDY! IT SNOWED LAST NIGHT!
IT DID?
YOU GOTTA COME OUT AND SEE! IT'S WAIST-DEEP!
REALLY? WOW?
I HAVEN'T SEEN SNOW THAT DEEP SINCE I WAS A KID!
COME ON!
SEE? WAIST-DEEP!
YOU MEAN CHEST-DEEP!
SIGH

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHOA! 22 HOURS OF T.V. NON-STOP. DON'T YOU FEEL GUILTY? SHOULDN'T WE DO OTHER THINGS?
LIKE SLEEP? READ BOOKS? SAVE THE WORLD? TAKE OUT THE TRASH?
HOW 'BOUT GETTING SOME MORE CHIPS? I JUST SWITCHED TO ANIMAL PLANET.
OOH! BARBEQUE OR SALT AND VINEGAR?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are giving and open to others. In fact, your generosity will sometimes extend to the point of sacrifice. You believe in working for the common good as a philosophical principal. You are truly unselfish. On the other hand, this is your path to your own happiness. The year ahead holds major changes. **Birthdate of:** Kristen Davis, actress; Billy Zane, actor; Paula Zahn, TV journalist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be careful about spending money today. Something you do might not achieve your intended purpose. You could end up with something that is not useful or helpful to you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Don't tackle bosses, parents or VIPs today. Avoid conflict. Whatever you do tends to easily be misconstrued or misunderstood. Wait until another day to make your point.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): There's no point in arguing to defend your religious or political beliefs today. Even though you think you know what you want to say, you will be misunderstood. Tread carefully.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is not the ideal day to share something or borrow anything. Confusion between yourself and friends and groups is likely. Some might question your motives.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Bosses, partners and close friends might misinterpret your actions. Try to be very clear in whatever you say or do today. Watch out for deception from others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Don't be tempted to take questionable shortcuts at work. You might want to duck out of something or hide work you don't want to do. (You could get caught.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's easy to be tempted to be dishonest today when dealing with children, or when doing anything related to sports, gambling and the entertainment world. Take the high road. Avoid this deception.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Confusion in discussions with family members is likely today. People say things they don't mean; furthermore, their ability to communicate the truth is limited. Things are foggy.

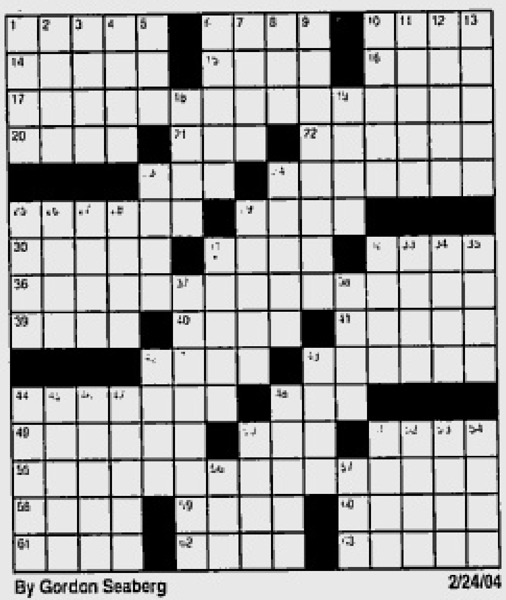
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be careful about liquids and chemical reactions. This also applies to food poisoning. Do not ingest, eat or swallow anything questionable. Wash your hands a lot today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a dicey day for gambling and financial speculation. However, your creative vibes are excellent! Stick to artistic self-expression, if you can.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Because you want to avoid something unpleasant, you might be loose with the truth today at home. Remember that it takes years to build up integrity and respect, and only one moment to lose it.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Take precautions driving, walking, jogging, etc., today. Your mind is too easily distracted by other things. If you can't be honest with others today, say nothing.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Gordon Seaberg
Los Angeles, CA

2/24/04

ACROSS
1 "It Happened One Night" star
6 Willowy
10 Willie Wonka's creator
14 Bay window
15 Albacore
16 Carpeting measurement
17 Feline singer?
20 Accomplishes
21 Miner's product
22 Show clearly
23 Witticism
24 Animal
25 Inn for youth
29 Churn up
30 Icy abode
31 Coors clear-malt beverage
32 Bone-dry
36 Canine newsman?
39 Shapes with an axe
40 Equestrian sport
41 Reef material
42 Outdoor gala
43 Word of warning
44 Courage
48 Provincetown catch
49 Denver suburb
50 Hobo
51 50/50 test choice
55 Ursine football coach
58 Facility
59 A smaller amount
60 Of the eyes
61 Winter ride
62 Otherwise
63 Pearly whites

DOWN
1 Prod
2 Singer Guthrie
3 Digestive fluid
4 Wine sediment
5 Culbertson of bridge
6 Get the ball rolling
7 Sealant for pipes
8 __ and outs
9 Relevant
10 Ship's crane
11 Looks __ everything
12 From this time
13 Modern surgical tool
18 Unruffled
19 Villainous
23 Calico call
24 Burger, fries and a drink, e.g.
25 "__ Noon"
26 Beastly character
27 Deli side
28 Santa's sackful
29 Engage in ransacking
31 Poland's currency
32 Load on board
33 Poet Pound
34 Admiral type
35 Perry's creator
37 Surgically correctable
38 Chilled
42 Dylan Thomas poem, "__ Hill"
43 Filmdom flop
44 Infants
45 Part of RFD
46 Got out of bed
47 Pledged
48 Blaspheme
50 Operatic voice
51 Classify
52 Word after going or flat
53 Army group
54 Make a meaningful impression?
56 Marine shocker
57 Decompose

Monday's Puzzle Solved

H	A	S	■	I	D	A	S	■	C	O	H	E	R	E
A	R	C	■	B	E	R	T	■	U	S	U	R	E	R
I	T	I	S	N	I	C	E	■	R	I	D	I	N	G
L	E	N	O	■	C	H	A	S	S	E	■	C	I	O
■	■	T	O	B	E	I	M	P	O	R	T	A	N	T
A	M	I	■	E	R	E	■	O	R	S	O	■	■	■
D	E	L	T	A	S	■	J	R	S	■	T	E	R	I
A	L	L	O	T	■	B	U	T	■	G	A	L	E	S
S	T	A	R	■	A	L	G	■	T	A	L	E	N	T
■	■	■	M	C	M	I	■	A	O	L	■	C	E	O
M	O	R	E	I	M	P	O	R	T	A	N	T	■	■
E	L	O	■	R	E	S	U	M	E	■	U	R	A	L
A	S	P	E	C	T	■	T	O	B	E	N	I	C	E
N	E	E	D	L	E	■	D	U	A	L	■	F	R	O
S	N	Y	D	E	R	■	O	R	G	S	■	Y	E	S

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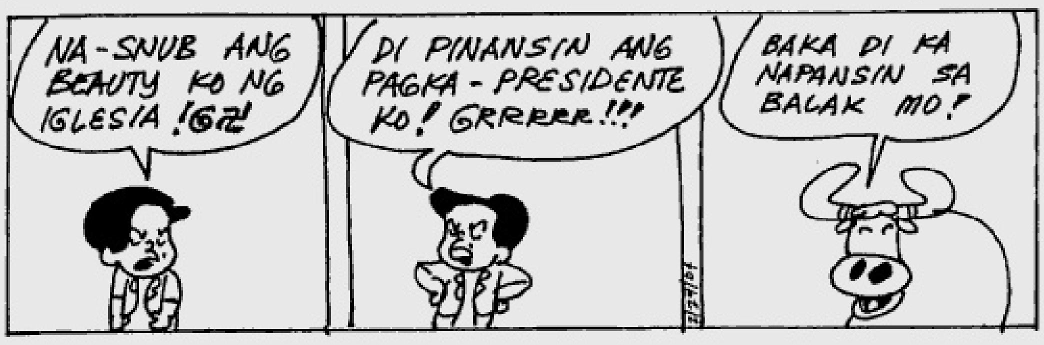
2/24/04

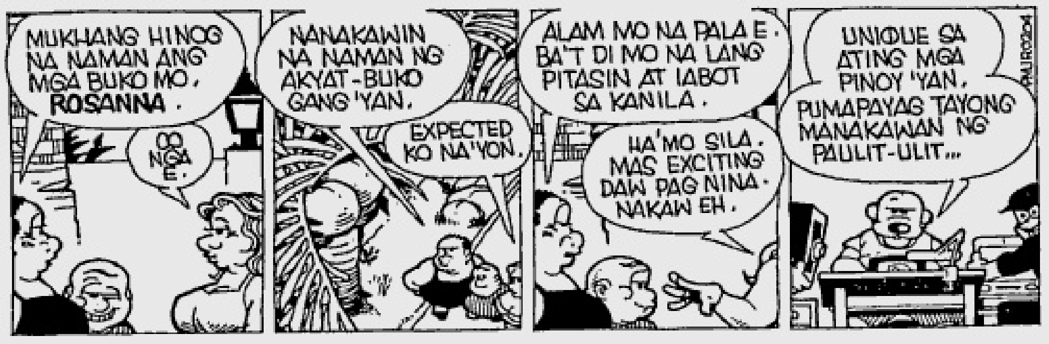
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NA-SNUB ANG BEAUTY KO NG IGLESIA !@#!
DI PINANSIN ANG PAGKA-PRESIDENTE KO! GRRRRR!!!
BAKA DI KA NAPANSIN SA BALAK MO?

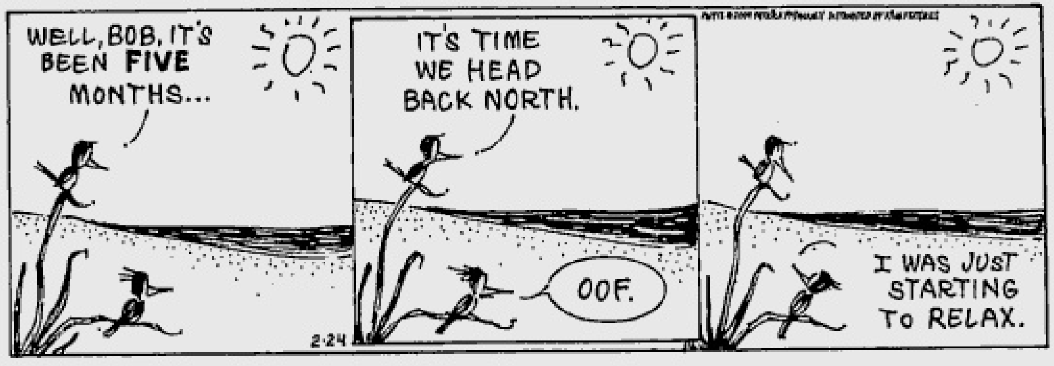
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MUKHANG HINOG NA NAMAN ANG MGA BUKO MO, ROSANNA.
OO NGA E.
NANAKAWIN NA NAMAN NG AKYAT-BUKO GANG 'YAN.
EXPECTED KO NA'YON.
ALAM MO NA PALA E. BA'T DI MO NA LANG PITASIN AT IABOT SA KANILA.
HA'MO SILA. MAS EXCITING DAW PAG NINANAKAW EH.
UNIQUE SA ATING MGA PINOY 'YAN. PUMAPAYAG TAYONG MANAKAWAN NG PAULIT-ULIT...

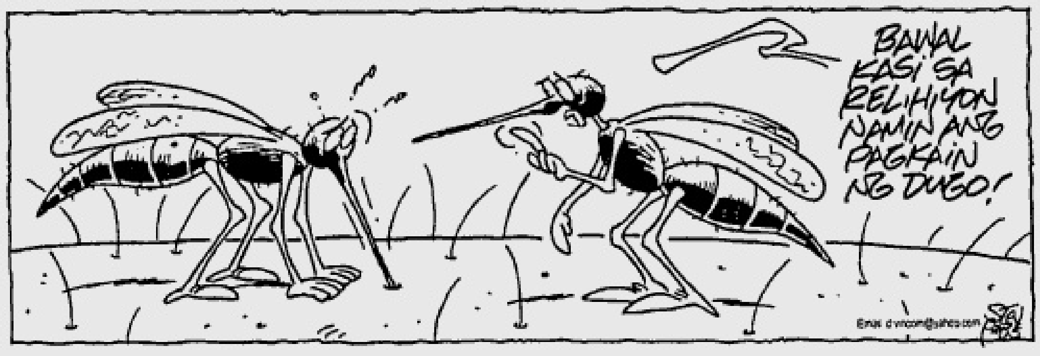
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WELL, BOB, IT'S BEEN FIVE MONTHS...
IT'S TIME WE HEAD BACK NORTH.
OOF.
I WAS JUST STARTING TO RELAX.
2-24

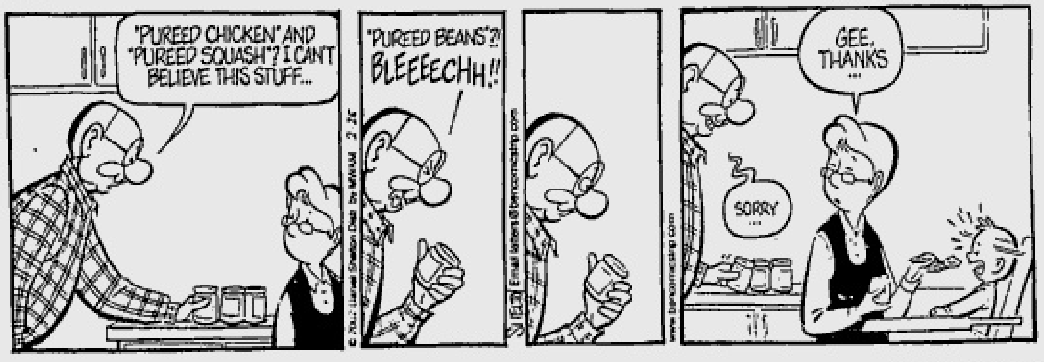
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BAWAL KASI SA RELIHIYON NAMIN ANG PAGKAIN NG DUGO!

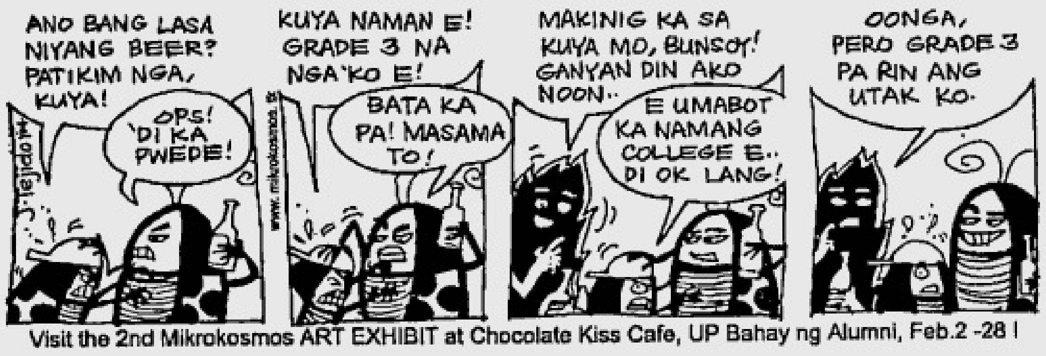
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


"PUREED CHICKEN" AND "PUREED SQUASH"? I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS STUFF...
"PUREED BEANS"?! BLEEEECHH!!
SORRY ...
GEE, THANKS ...

MIKROKOSMOS

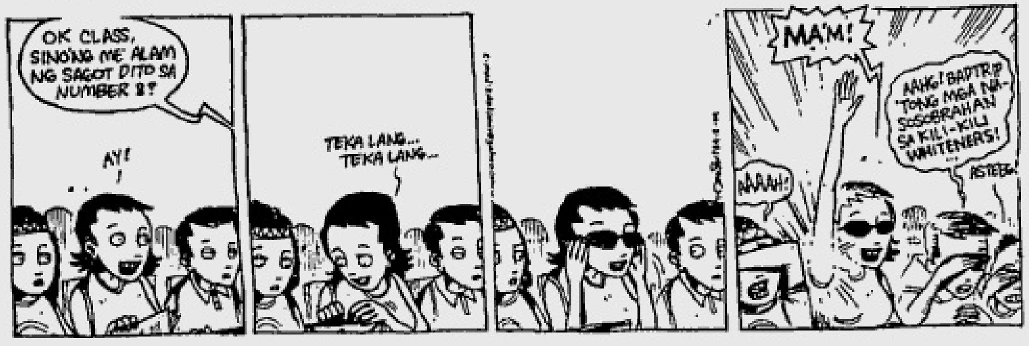
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANO BANG LASA NIYANG BEER? PATIKIM NGA, KUYA!
OPS! 'DI KA PWEDE!
KUYA NAMAN E! GRADE 3 NA NGA'KO E!
BATA KA PA! MASAMA TO!
MAKINIG KA SA KUYA MO, BUNSOY! GANYAN DIN AKO NOON..
E UMABOT KA NAMANG COLLEGE E.. DI OK LANG!
OONGA, PERO GRADE 3 PA RIN ANG UTAK KO.
www.mikrokosmos.tk

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 !

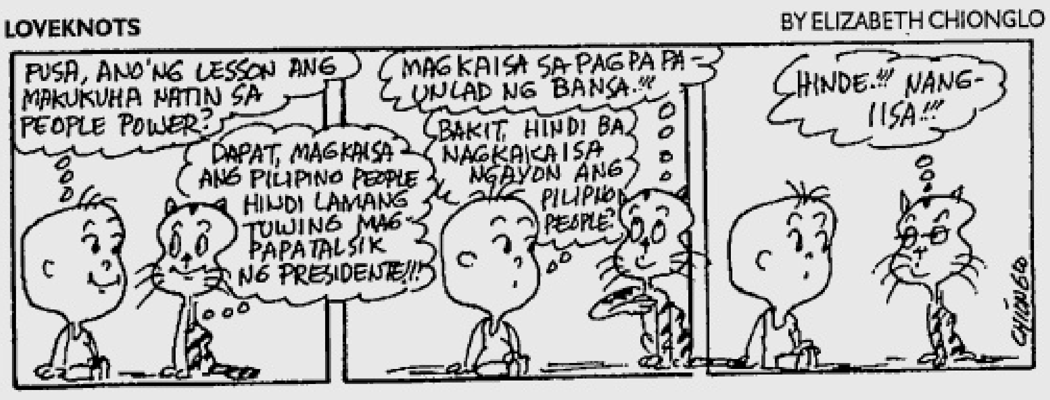
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


OK CLASS, SINO'NG ME ALAM NG SAGOT DITO SA NUMBER 8?
AY!
TEKA LANG... TEKA LANG...
MA'M!
AAAH!
AAHG! BADTRIP 'TONG MGA NASOSOBRAHAN SA KILI-KILI WHITENERS!
ASTEEG!

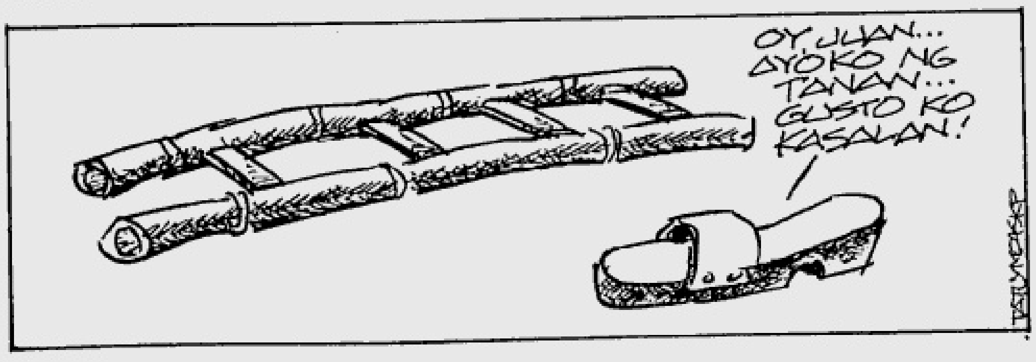
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

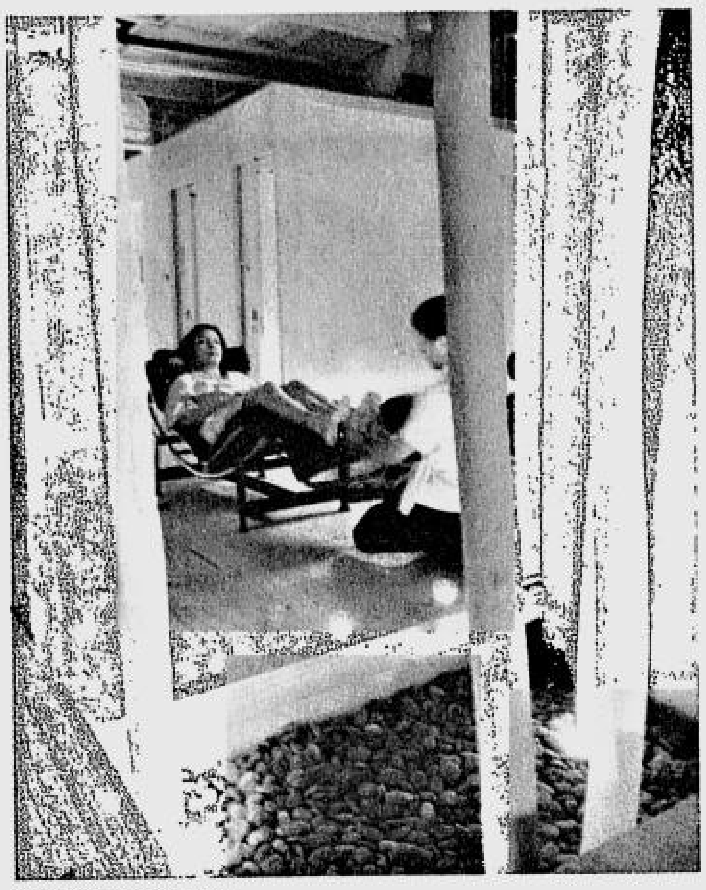

PUSA, ANO'NG LESSON ANG MAKUKUHA NATIN SA PEOPLE POWER?
DAPAT, MAGKAISA ANG PILIPINO PEOPLE HINDI LAMANG TUWING MAGPAPATALSIK NG PRESIDENTE!!!
MAGKAISA SA PAGPAPAUNLAD NG BANSA.!!!
BAKIT, HINDI BA NAGKAKAISA NGAYON ANG PILIPINO PEOPLE?
HINDE.!!! NANG-IISA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY JUAN... AYOKO NG TANAN... GUSTO KO KASALAN!

De-stressing in the urban jungle



REFLEXOLOGY room

NEO Day Spa in Bonifacio Global City offers a tranquil place for people to de-stress and clear their minds.

The spa tries to cater to all five senses and give guests the ultimate service spiritually, mentally and physically. A tea bar allows guests to relax with a hot cup of green tea as they wait for a member of the staff to attend to them.

Neo offers a more personalized approach with private or semi-private rooms.

New guests might want to try the Ingham Method of foot reflexology that uses the hands to apply pressure to specific points or zones of the feet and hands to relieve stress and redirect energy.

For deeper relaxation, they can opt for a good massage. Neo has a whole line of massages to suit every client's needs. Popular among women, for instance, is the Lymphatic Drainage Massage that stimulates the lymphatic systems, removing toxins and making the immune system more efficient.

Neo is also one of the few spas in the Philippines that offers the exclusive Thalgo body treatments. Thalgo products are all-natural and marine-based. Among the treatments available are the Seaweed Tranquility Wrap using marine algae and the Dead Sea Mud Treatment that nourishes and purifies the skin.

Thalgo also has facial treatments ranging from cleansing to nourishing to soothing. The O2 Facial, for instance, has enriched marine algae to provide essential micro-nutrients. It hydrates and protects the skin from harmful urban pollution.

MASSAGE therapy

Neo provides a full line of scalp treatments from Davines and offers yoga sessions throughout the week. The center also has space for pajama parties, bridal showers, get-togethers, etc.

Neo Day Spa Bonifacio Global City is at the G/F, Net One Center, 26th St. cor. 3rd Ave., Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. tel. 815-8233 or 815-6948. Visit their website at www.neo.ph or e-mail info@neo.ph.

Municipal health execs like ampalaya extract

CLINICAL trials have found that the Charantia Ampalaya Food Supplement helps stabilize elevated blood sugar levels.

This was reported by Herbcare Corporation, maker of the food supplement for diabetics. The company said they had the product tested by diabetes experts.

Daniel Abelarde, Herbcare general manager, said results of the study were published in the July-August 2001 issue of the Philippine Journal of Internal Medicine.

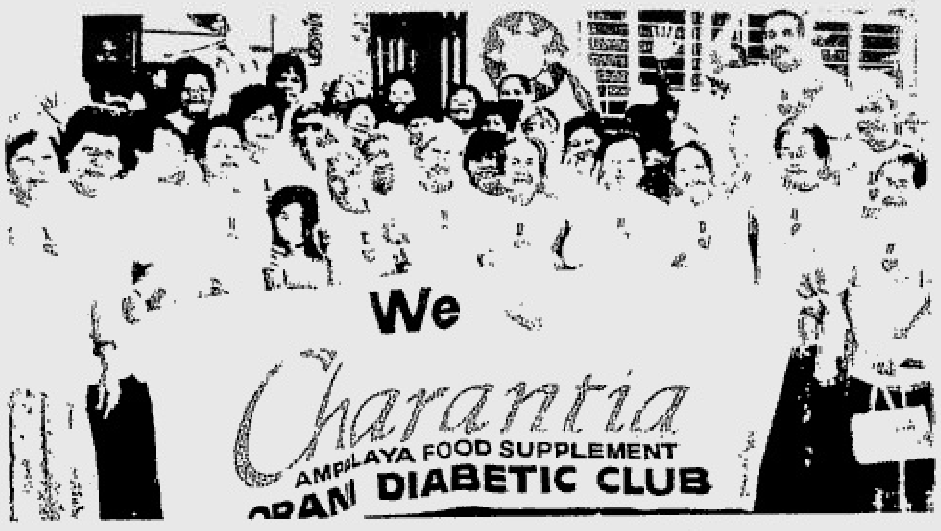
He said the product has also been endorsed by the Association of Municipal Health Officers of the. Philippines (Amhop).

Dr. Guia Abad, president of Amhop, said Charantia should be taken with a balanced diet, proper exercise and medication.

Charantia is now available in original loose tea bits, tea bags and capsules to suit individual preferences.

It is being distributed in the United States, Canada, Europe, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Gulf Estates, Africa, Japan, Hong Kong, Saipan and Australia.

THE HERBCARE team conducting Fast Blood Sugar tests



THE ORANI Diabetic Club supports Charantia Ampalaya Food Supplement.

First Celebrity Open today

TIMEZONE celebrates its sixth year with its first-ever Celebrity Open at 4 p.m., Feb. 24, at Glorietta 4.

Big names in show business, sports and fashion and Timezone gaming enthusiasts will compete in various games. They will be divided into teams of five to six members. Sportscaster Anthony Suntay will host the event.

At stake are valuable prizes from LG, Timezone, Ayala Cinemas, 3D, Coleman and Gold's Gym.

Sponsors of the event are Ayala Cinemas, Tokyo Tokyo, Fruit Magic and Gold's Gym.

Timezone centers are located at Glorietta 2, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 1 and Greenbelt 3 of Ayala Center; Alabang Town Center Main and Cinema; SM Megamall; Starmall; Metropoint; Greenhills Theater Mall; Pavilion Mall; Ayala Center Cebu and the newly opened Robinson's Lipa Batangas.

QUAKER
-62% lowered
TOTAL CHOLESTEROL by
average of 27 points!

PARTICIPANTS in the 30-day Quaker Oats Smart Heart Challenge held at Tektite Building, Ortigas Center

Smart food for the strong heart

From page D1

Those chosen trooped every morning to the fourth floor canteen to get their free bowls of oatmeal. They were asked to submit a daily food log in return for a P25 food stub, which served as a discount on food purchases for that day.

"The initial come-on for us was the free health check-up and the free oatmeal everyday for a month," says Judy Lim, 43, of Belle Corporation, who joined the program with her office mate, Marilyn Rico, 42.

For Reu Tanopo, 38, an applications consultant with Ifca Consulting Philippines Inc., it was the chance to improve his health. He was overweight and hypertensive when he joined the program.

Oatmeal, everyone agreed, did not make for a tasty meal. Without additives like sugar, milk or fresh fruits, cooked oatmeal was bland and highly filling.

To avoid getting satiated, "I rotated my intake," Tanopo says. "Sometimes I would eat it for breakfast, or divide it into two portions, consuming the rest at lunch or dinner."

The effects were immediate, he says. "I had better digestion, and I was more energetic. *Hindi na ako masyado antukin.*"

Lim and Rico, on the other hand, were delighted to discover that it helped them start—and stick to—a no-nonsense diet.

"We became more health-conscious," recalls Lim. "We started using Canola oil for our cooking, we would check if junk food had saturated fat, *ganun.*"

"It was not just eating Quaker Oats anymore, but also discipline," adds Rico.

Beneficial effects

After 30 days, the results made clear that the benefits experienced by Tanopo, Lim and Rico were real.

About 69 percent of men and 57 percent of women participants reduced their total cholesterol levels by 27.1 mg%.

Cholesterol is either "good" cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein or HDL) or "bad" (low-density lipoprotein or LDL). The first is beneficial, the other is not. With the program, about 75 percent of the males and 69 percent of the females reduced their bad cholesterol levels by 23.3 mg%.

Taken together, the numbers are persuasive. About 62 percent of the participants lowered their total cholesterol levels by an average of 27 points, and 71 percent shaved off bad cholesterol levels by 23 points.

Among men, the risk of heart disease went down from 36.1 percent to 30.6 percent. Among women, it was from 36.4 to 17.3 percent.

All this by taking oatmeal everyday only for 30 days.

"There were additional health benefits cited," Dr. Florentino points out. "Most participants lost weight, the proportion of overweight and obese participants decreased, and the blood pressure of hypertensives also went down."

In context

However, all the benefits should be taken in context, cautions Dr. Florentino. Oatmeal is not a miracle food. It has to work with other factors, like a healthy diet and a physically active life.

"Take oatmeal daily, but continue with a low-saturated fat, low-cholesterol diet," he advises. "If you are hypertensive, limit your salt intake. If possible, engage in regular physical exercise. Stop smoking, and consult your physician regularly."

Such advice is being heeded by his captive audience. About 90 percent of the participants say they will continue to eat oatmeal regularly and stick to a healthy diet.

And they're just too happy to be part of a fun global program (the first Quaker Oats Smart Heart Challenge was held in the US, Malaysia and Hong Kong, and is being replicated in other countries).

"The best part for me was, we got to meet a lot of new friends!" says Lim.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

DOSAGE

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RAGOLDS candies come in two variants: Juicefuls and Creamfuls. Juicefuls has flavors like Apple, Strawberry and Black Currant. Creamfuls, on the other hand, offers flavors such as Cappuccino, Raspberry and Strawberry. Ragolds candies are exclusively distributed by Benby Enterprises, Inc.

Local dairy industry shapes up

Text and photo by Linda B. Bolido

FILIPINOS are drinking more—milk that is.

While lactose intolerance (the inability to process milk well, resulting in an upset stomach) continues to be a problem with many, the greater variety available to consumers seems to have inspired people to drink more of the beverage, considered to be the most complete food around.

Of course, much of the milk Filipinos are drinking is still sourced from outside the country, with Australia accounting for about 43 percent (averaging $160 million in the last five years) of total dairy import. Australia and New Zealand are the Philippines' top two sources of dairy supplies.

The fledgling dairy industry, although growing at an impressive double-digit annual rate (the increase in production units has averaged 21 percent in the last four years), is only able to produce one percent of the Philippines' total daily requirement.

With only a handful of modern dairy producers and processors around, a significant share of the local supply comes from small farmers raising a few cows in their own backyards, so to speak.

Dairy cooperatives have sprung up in various regions of the country. About half of local milk production, according to Sally Bulatao, head of the Department of Agriculture's National Dairy Authority (NDA), is absorbed in the local communities where it is produced. The other half goes to school and community milk feeding programs co-funded by local government units.

Immediate consumption of milk is of utmost importance. Produce of any kind suffers during the trip from the farm to the market.

Newly harvested milk is an even more perishable commodity. With dairy production being more grassroots-based, maintaining the quality of milk poses problems.

A new testing initiative will help improve the quality of Philippine milk and guarantee its safety

ndarin Oriental Manila
February 17, 2004

AT THE HANDOVER of the new Milk Quality Systems program: Phillip Goode of Dairy Australia, Ambassador Ruth Pearce of Australia, Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo Jr. and Su O'Hoy Herrera, program manager

Milk processors in Laguna and Nueva Ecija manage to bring their output to the NDA central laboratory in Quezon City. In other parts of the country with existing cooperatives, dairy technicians, assisted by NDA's extension workers, conduct tests at the farm level and at the collection centers.

Only occasionally is the central laboratory able to assist producers in the Visayas and Mindanao. That is obviously a less than ideal situation.

Making milk safe

But improvements can be expected soon, which will guarantee consumers throughout the country of high-quality and safe locally produced milk.

A few days ago, in simple ceremonies attended by Australia's ambassador to the Philippines Ruth Pearce and capped by a milk toast, Phillip Goode, manager of international policy for Dairy Australia, handed over to Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo the Australia-Philippines Milk Quality Systems Development Program, a laboratory manual for testing milk quality, to be piloted in the Visayas.

Dairy Australia is a service company owned by the Australian dairy industry. Its members are farmers and industry bodies.

Bulatao said the handover signified "a higher level of quality monitoring capacity for our dairy production units in the Visayas."

Goode said, in helping develop the program, his company shared its experiences and adjusted its systems to meet the local situation in an effort to provide the NDA, which is tasked with developing the local industry to ensure wholesome, affordable milk to consumers and, consequently, promote good nutrition while helping make dairy profitable to farmers, with a scheme that would serve the Philippine dairy industry well.

The development of the pilot Philippine system was spearheaded by project manager Su O'Hoy Herrera of Australia's Sulamo Consulting Pty. Ltd.

Milk drinkers increase

Bulatao explained the significance of the new initiative: "With regular testing of milk products, consumers will be assured of higher quality fresh milk-based products. Regular testing will enable us to introduce the grading of fresh milk, which is done in other more developed markets... Somehow, consumers have come to appreciate the superior taste of fresh milk and fresh milk-based dairy products compared to recombined and reconstituted milk. This accounts for the growing demand for fresh milk which can only be supplied by local producers. [But] fresh milk [has] limited shelf life of about seven days. Most milk in the market with longer shelf life has been treated in ultra-high temperature (UHT). UHT milk is either fresh milk-based or made with recombined milk powder. The supply of fresh milk is still limited but is growing steadily."

The NDA official said research materials from dairy companies did not seem to validate the widespread notion that Filipinos were generally lactose-intolerant. However, it was true they were not as big milk drinkers as other people.

But Filipinos loved dairy in other guises, as shown by the fact that the local dairy market generated some P54 billion in sales annually.

A study conducted by the Food and Nutrition Institute last year showed 77.3 percent of surveyed households used milk as beverage, 45.7 percent as creamer and 4.9 percent as ingredient. Imports of ready-to-drink milk rose to over 43 million kilograms in 2002 from less than 20 million kilos in 1999.

Bulatao said testing involved additional costs, so farmers needed economic incentives to submit to the process. The NDA was working with local processors to balance costs and economic benefits.

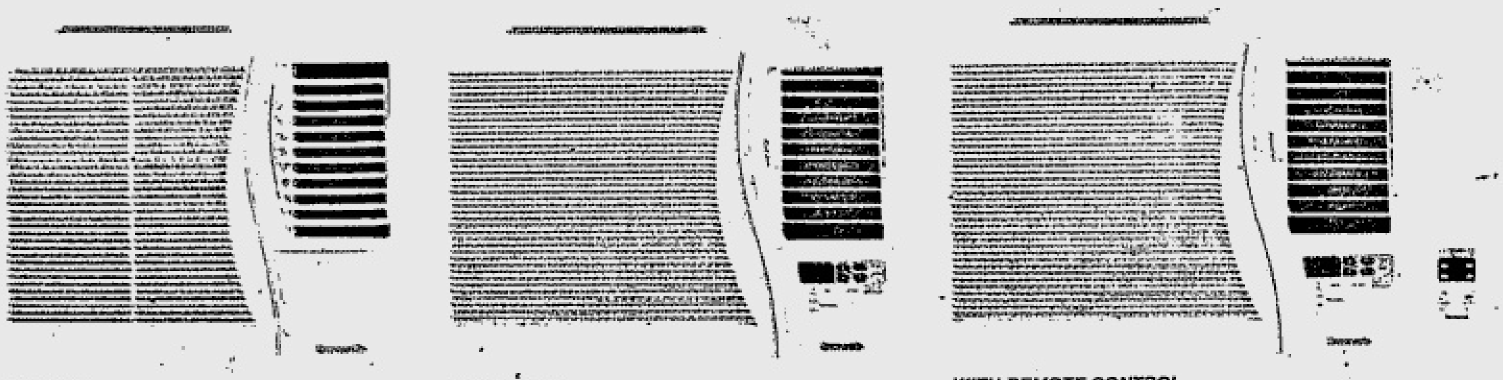
In this regard, the NDA expected to implement this year in cooperation with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization and upon endorsement by the National Economic and Development Authority, a milk payment system based on quality and composition of milk.

Also collaborating in this initiative is the Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers.

E-mail the author at lbolido@hotmail.com.

More practical reasons to Cool Down.

Panasonic
Window-Type Air Conditioners



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3/4 HP TIMER	14,199	12,499
3/4 HP REMOCON	14,999	12,999
1.0 HP MANUAL	13,499	12,999
STANDARD MODELS		
1.0 HP MANUAL	14,799	13,999
1.0 HP TIMER	15,699	14,999
1.0 HP REMOCON	16,599	15,999
2.0 HP MANUAL	21,599	19,999
2.0 HP REMOCON	22,999	21,499
2.5 HP MANUAL	23,999	22,499
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1.5 HP MANUAL	15,999
1.5 HP TIMER	16,699
1.5 HP REMOCON	17,799

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Panasonic
ideas for life

- **Entertainment / A32**

Nora Aunor fights aging

- **News /A6**

It's Ash Wednesday today

- **Northern Luzon/ A20**

Kapampangans who changed history

- **Lifestyle/ D1**

INQUIRER readers raise the roof

Tanong ng Bayan

See Page A22

22 manta rays butchered

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—At least 22 endangered manta rays were seized Monday at a checkpoint set up on Maharlika Highway in Barangay Talipan, Pagbilao, by authorities and environmentalists.

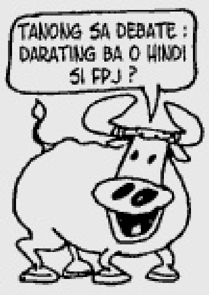
Task Force Matatag confiscated the manta rays (*Manta birostris*) from the driver of a fish

22 MANTA/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'Da King' snubs debate

By Martin P. Marfil and Blanche S. Rivera


TANONG SA DEBATE : DARATING BA O HINDI SI FPJ ?

ORGANIZERS should make it easier for Fernando Poe Jr. to participate in a presidential debate by providing him a script and assuring him of a director, multiple takes and, if nec-

DA KING/ A9

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Wednesday, February 25, 2004 ★★★ 62 pages / 6 sections / vol. 19 / no. 79 P18

website: www.inq7.net

GMA catches up with FPJ

Pulse Asia survey: Gloria got 31.9 %, Poe, 31.7 %

By Juliet Labog-Javellana Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has caught up with actor Fernando Poe Jr. in the latest nationwide survey of voters' first choice for president.

Ms Macapagal and Poe are now neck-and-neck in the presidential race, according to the survey that Pulse Asia Inc. conducted in January and February.

The US-trained economist and daughter of former President Diosdado Macapagal got 31.9 percent of the votes while the multi-awarded actor and high school dropout received 31.7 percent in the survey of 1,800 respondents, aged 18 years and over.

The survey, conducted in two batches from Jan. 23 to Feb. 8 and from Feb. 16 to Feb. 20, had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points at the 95-percent confidence level.

A total of 8.1 percent of the respondents were either undecided or had no choice at all, while 23 percent said the possibility that they would change their preference between now and May 10 was big/very big.

Pulse Asia said the results meant that if the presidential election were held today, it would be a very close fight between Ms Macapagal and Poe.

"While the January and February 2004 surveys continue to indicate a close fight for the presidency, this time around the contest is between the incumbent

GMA/ A21

PDI PHOTO/FOUNDATION FOR WORLDWIDE PEOPLE POWER

A FRONT-RUNNER even then, Sen. John Kerry in his 1st year as a senator in 1986 spoke before a rally held by Filipinos in Washington in support of the 4-day revolt going on in Manila. Behind is Cecille Alvarez.

White House contender backed fight vs Marcos

By Miner Generalao
Head, Research Department

A STRONG contender for the US Democratic presidential nomination played a low-key but important role in the fight of the Philippines and its allies to oust Ferdinand Marcos.

During the twilight years of the Marcos dictatorship, Sen. John Kerry, then a first-term legislator from Massachusetts and a member of the US Senate foreign relations committee, stood on the wintry morning of Feb. 24, 1986 (evening of Feb. 24 in Manila) before members of the Ninoy Aquino Movement (NAM) who had gathered in front of the White House in Washington to pressure the strongman to give up without a fight.

WHITE/ A22

Edsa I is 18; spark gone but meaning endures

By Christian V. Esguerra and Volt Contreras

"THINNING crowd" notwithstanding, President Macapagal-Arroyo takes a break from the campaign trail to lead today's 18th-anniversary celebration of the Edsa people power revolt that restored democracy to the country.

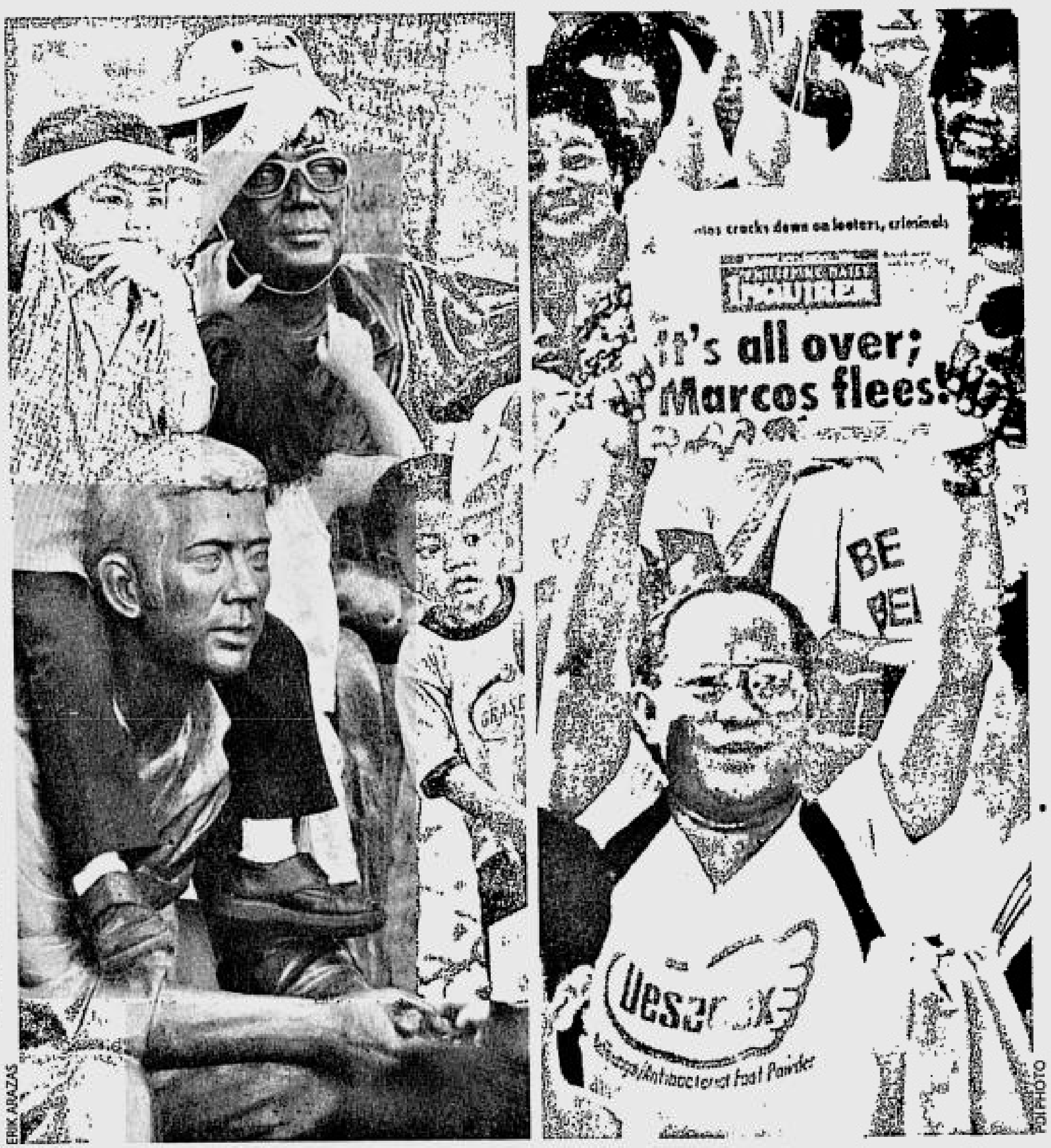
Ms Macapagal will lead a 7 a.m. flag-raising at the People Power Monument on the historic highway, along with former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, two key figures in the civilian-backed uprising.

The three Presidents appeared unfazed by the fact that fewer and fewer people have been showing up yearly at the government-led anniversary rites.

Aquino's spokesperson Lourdes Siytangco yesterday told the INQUIRER that the celebration was "not actually about the thinning crowd but about the need for people to work together amid all these problems the country is facing."

Siytangco compared the celebration to a debutante: "When a person turns 18 and is confronted by problems, you don't regret that the person was ever born.

EDSA I/ A22


Marcos cracks down on looters, criminals
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
It's all over; Marcos flees!
BE
BEI

ERIK ARAZAS

PDI PHOTO

GENERATIONS will long remember the sacrifices of Ninoy Aquino and Evelio Javier to consummate the Filipinos' yearning for freedom that saw its flowering in the non-violent People Power Revolt during Edsa I.

'Pipay embodied American dream'

NEW YORK—A Filipino-American financial analyst whose decomposing body was found last week at the home of a phony doctor who had treated her was remembered as an accomplished but selfless businesswoman pursuing the American dream.

Grieving relatives, friends and co-workers from Barclays Bank, where Maria Pilar Cruz was a rising star, gathered at a Greenwich Village church for her funeral Mass. Her ashes were to be sent back to the Philippines where she grew up.

The Rev. Erno Diaz, who officiated the Mass, said Cruz embodied the American dream, even in her short life.

"She came from the Philippines to make it in New York," Diaz said. "And of course, with her brains, with her determination, and also with her courage ... she made it."

"You were a very big dreamer," Cruz's older sister, Teresa Lara, said in a eulogy. "You were not afraid to move out of your comfort zone, away from your family, away from the life you

PIPAY/ A21

THE FACES of sorrow: The family of Maria Pilar Cruz leaves Our Lady of Pompeii Church in New York's Greenwich Village after a funeral Mass. Front row, Cruz's father, Rodolfo Cruz (left) comforted by Jose Navarro and her mother, Irena (right) and aunt Rebecca de los Angeles (center).

As debate rages, Mel Gibson's 'Passion' opens today in US

By Ruben V. Nepales
Los Angeles Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—The two lead actors of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" defended the highly controversial movie that had sparked debate it might fuel anti-Semitism feelings and that its director was anti-Semite, as it opens in the United States on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent.

But what has not been questioned by those who have seen the film is that it is a powerful depiction of Jesus' last 12 hours based on the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There are only brief flashbacks showing such episodes as the Sermon on the Mount and the Last Supper.

This INQUIRER correspondent was among a handful of members of the international press selected to watch the movie and interview its lead actors, Jim Caviezel, who plays Jesus, and Maia Morgenstern, in the role of Mary.

AS DEBATE/ A11

EDSA I TIMELINE

Day Four, Feb. 25, 1986

By PDI Research

MIDNIGHT: Marcos loyalist soldiers fire through barbed wire, injuring a number of people on Nagtahan Street. Some of Marcoses' belongings are taken out of Malacañang.

3:30 a.m.: Marines rejoice as orders to attack Camp Crame are canceled.

3:45 a.m.: Reinforcements on board planes ordered by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver head for Clark Air Base, where they stay for the duration of the revolt.

5 a.m.: On phone to Washington, President Ferdinand Marcos asks US Sen. Paul Laxalt if he should resign. Laxalt's reply: "I think you should cut, and cut cleanly. The time has come."

Marcos tells Labor Minister Blas Ople who's lobbying in Washington for the Marcos regime, he is not stepping down because First Lady Imelda Marcos does not want him to.

5:30 a.m.: Marcos himself gives go-signal for his family to prepare to leave.

6 a.m.: Rebel soldiers storm Channel 9's transmitter tower, which is being held by loyalist troops. Sounds of gun battle are heard at Aquino residence on Times Street, Quezon City, where Corazon Aquino and her children are.

DAY FOUR/ A22

WEATHER [redacted]

FORECAST: The whole country will continue to experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Luzon and Bicol Region.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/25/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy	[redacted]	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy	[redacted]
Baguio	Cloudy	[redacted]	Roxas	Cloudy	[redacted]
Tuguegarao	Cloudy	[redacted]	Cebu	Cloudy	[redacted]
Laoag	Cloudy	[redacted]	Tacloban	Cloudy	[redacted]
Clark Zone	Cloudy	[redacted]	Gen. Santos	Cloudy	[redacted]
Tagaytay	Cloudy	[redacted]	Zamboanga	Cloudy	[redacted]
Legazpi	Cloudy	[redacted]	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy	[redacted]
Calapan	Cloudy	[redacted]	Davao	Cloudy	[redacted]

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

FPJ is official LDP bet, SC rules

By Philip C. Tubeza
and Norman Bordadora

FERNANDO Poe Jr. is the official standard bearer of the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

The Supreme Court yesterday struck down a Commission on Elections ruling that recognized presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson and his allies as LDP bets. The high court also castigated the Comelec for the previous ruling "that effectively divided the opposition."

In its 25-page en banc decision, the SC directed the poll body to acknowledge as official LDP candidates only those who have certificates of candidacy (COC) signed by party chair Senator Edgardo Angara or his duly authorized representative.

No authority

Lacson's COC was signed by LDP secretary general Rep. Agapito Aquino, whom the court said had no authority, under the party constitution, to nominate candidates without Angara's permission.

The SC said candidates whose COCs were signed by Aquino could still run, but as independent candidates. This means Lacson and his team are not entitled to a copy of election returns, or to have representatives in election committees that the Comelec may create.

Last year, the LDP was split into two factions, the Aquino and Angara wings. Angara's group asked the Comelec in December to recognize only their faction, but the poll body decided to recognize both wings.

Angara's camp went to the Supreme Court and the tribunal, voting 10-3, agreed with its position. Associate Justices Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez and Renato Corona dissented; Senior Associate Justice Reynato Puno was on leave.

The ruling penned by Justice Dante Tinga said: "The Comelec should have decided the case on the basis of the party constitution and election laws. It chose not to because of the irrational fear of treading, as (Aquino) put it, on 'uncharted' territories. But...these territories have long been charted by jurisprudence and in any case, the Comelec need not have sailed far from the shore to arrive at the correct conclusion. In truth, the Comelec resolution is indecision in the guise of equity."

'No effect'

Lacson said the SC decision only made him stronger and his supporters, especially his poll watchers that included retired police and military officers, more vigilant. He said he would file a motion for reconsideration but would abide by the Supreme Court's will if it denies the motion.

"(But) there is no effect on our campaign," Lacson told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. Neither would it affect the possible unification of the opposition come April, he added.

"I don't think Angara consulted with the leaders of (Poe's) Koalisyong ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino regarding this matter. He just wants us to be down and out," Lacson said.

Lacson's faction in the LDP enjoys the support of Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla, his only senatorial bet; and representatives Agapito Aquino of Makati City, Rolex Suplico of Iloilo and Gilbert Remulla of Cavite.

Earlier, Lacson said he would step aside and return to the Senate if an LDP convention chose another candidate for president. No convention was held; instead, Angara forged the KNP with other opposition parties, and the alliance drafted Poe.

Sotto says Palace pressured scribe; show biz group rallies behind FPJ

By Christine O. Avendaño

DAYS before a movie columnist revived a 36-year-old complaint against opposition presidential bet Fernando Poe Jr., he sought out a friend's help over the pressure he was getting from his publisher, a former Malacañang official, to revive the old charge.

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This developed as show biz luminaries rallied behind Poe against what they called baseless character attacks against the opposition presidential candidate.

The group, Mga Artista para kay FPJ, led by national artist Eddie Romero, matinee idol Richard Gomez, film producer Armida Siguion-Reyna and film directors Mel Tionglo and Joel Lamangan, stood squarely behind Poe as they blamed politics for the attacks.

Sotto said Cabaluna's friend, whom he did not identify, had also told former Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, a senatorial bet of Poe's the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, and told him of the Journal publisher's pressure.

Sotto said Lim told him about the matter two weeks ago.

He said there were some people who wanted to talk to him about Cabaluna and his predicament.

But the other day, Cabaluna held a news conference anyway to tell his story, which Sotto said was untrue.

"My heart goes out to Cabaluna. I can just imagine how he feels," Sotto said in a phone interview.

On Monday, Capco denied Sotto's allegation, saying that Cabaluna "is his own man."

"Whatever he did is his own business," Capco said.

The denial was to be expected, the actor's show biz supporters said.

"Malacañang is sure to deny its hand in this. But who is behind the dredging up of the story? Who is in a position to exert pressure on an editor of a government-sequestered newspaper to resuscitate interest on details the same editor had himself categorically dismissed, in a YES! Magazine issue of December 2003, as an 'urban legend' that 'never happened?" the Mga Artista para kay FPJ said in a statement.

For his part, Romero called Cabaluna's accusations flimsy. "I feel awkward defending FPJ on such flimsy charges," the national artist said.

The group also dismissed insinuations that Poe was "dangerous to press freedom in this country."

"FPJ will be a valiant soldier of press freedom," Lamangan said, and called accusations against the presidential candidate "cabaluntanan."

"We remember Tina Panganiban-Perez. We remember Ellen Tordesillas," the group added, alluding to the two lady journalists who were publicly castigated by President Macapagal-Arroyo for alleged negative reporting.

"The real threat to press freedom are the people who pay media to dig up dirt against people," Siguion-Reyna said.

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L300 FB DUAL AIRCON	600,000	80,000	24,080	17,228	12,256

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260,000	23,333	16,197	13,091	9,365	7,656	6,663
292,500	24,375	16,669	13,479	9,642	7,780	6,661
300,000	25,000	16,667	12,500	9,399	7,584	6,687

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2004
E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph
Second FRONTPAGE

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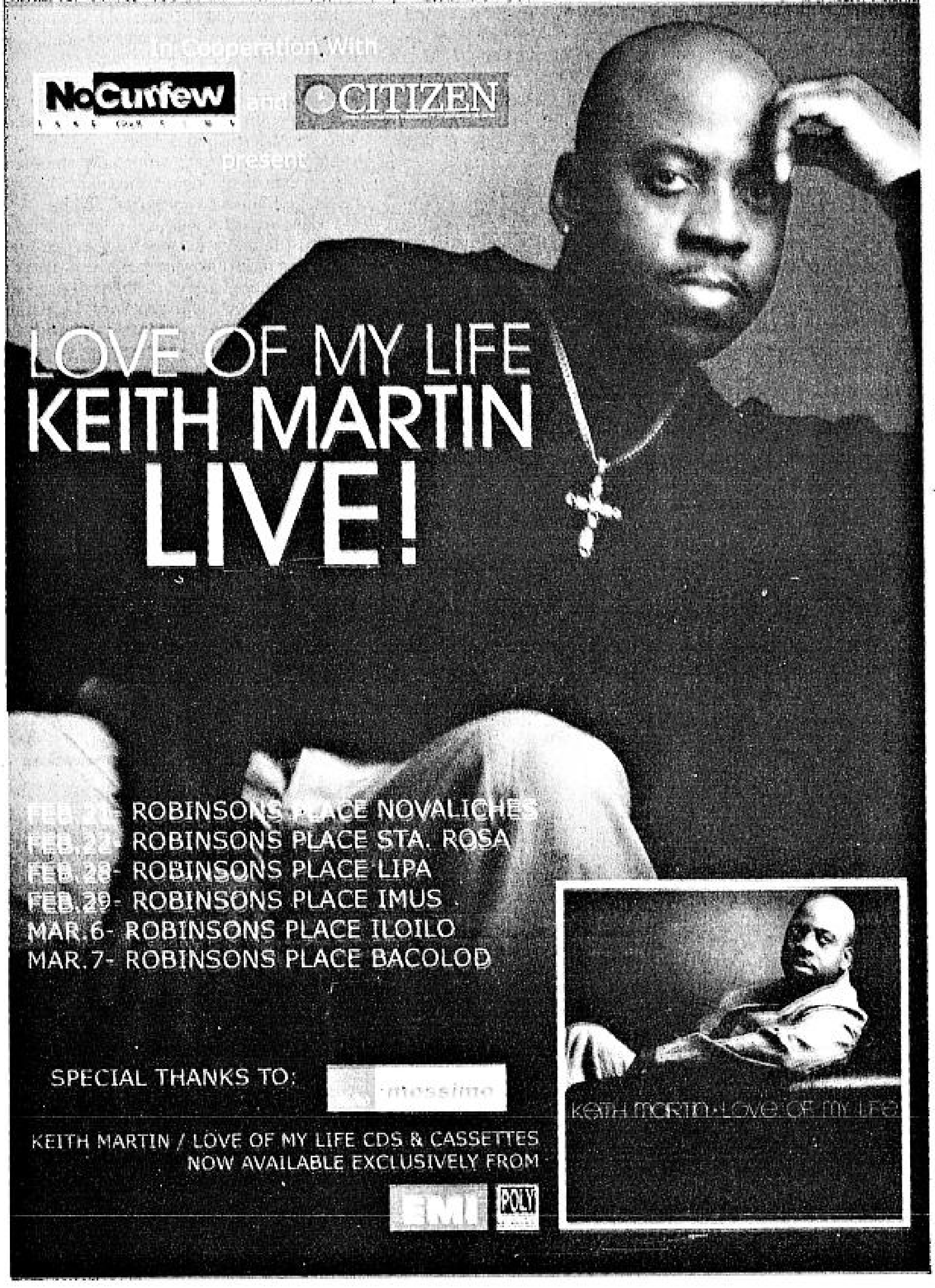

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Army paper can't help FPJ, says lawyer

By Philip Tubeza and Cynthia Balana

ONE of the petitioners in the disqualification case against Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday said the army document purportedly proving the actor's filiation with his father should not be given any weight by the Supreme Court since it contradicted evidence Poe's own lawyers had earlier submitted to the Commission on Elections.

Lawyer Ma. Jeanette Tecson said the "Affidavit for Philippine Army Personnel" signed by Poe's father, Allan F. Poe, was at variance with the "judicial admissions" submitted by Poe lawyer Estelito Mendoza to the Comelec.

"They made these judicial admissions and they are not allowed to contradict them," Tecson said.

The Supreme Court is deliberating whether Poe is a natural-born Filipino citizen after his birth to an American mother and a father whose nationality had been listed in different documents as either Spanish or Filipino. The timing of their marriage had also come into question after documents listed it as occurring either in 1940 or 1939.

The information in the "affidavit" of Poe's father showed the latter was married to Bessie Kelly in January 1939 at the Malate Church. This contradicted the information in Poe's birth certificate which Mendoza turned in to the Comelec that said his parents were wed on Sept. 16, 1940.

Tecson also noted that the "affidavit" stated that Poe was 5 years old in 1947, while his birth certificate showed that he was born on Aug. 20, 1939, making him 8 years old then.

Mendoza tried to explain the discrepancies by saying he had been "advised" that Poe's parents were married prior to September 1940 but this was not revealed because the father was a budding matinee idol then and the marriage would have hindered his career.

Tecson reiterated that the Supreme Court could already decide the case based on the contradictory documents submitted by Poe's lawyers.

But Gleo Guerra, senior chief staff officer at the Supreme Court, said on Friday the justices could decide they lacked the jurisdiction to rule on the citizenship issue.

Under that scenario, they could send the case to a lower court or stand aside entirely, leaving in place two rulings by the Comelec that said Poe was eligible to run for president.

Poe's camp had expressed confidence the justices would clear the way for the movie star's candidacy.

But Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay yesterday accused Poe of covering up his citizenship status by giving contradicting statements and submitting allegedly tampered documents to prove he was a natural-born Filipino.

Pichay said the documents the actor turned in to two government agencies had been tampered with. These were the birth certificate Poe submitted when he renewed his passport with the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the documents Mendoza presented to the Comelec to rebut the disqualification petition lodged against the movie star.

Poe himself had expressed doubts about the authenticity of his birth certificate issued by the Civil Registrar's Office because of discrepancies, he said, in the information it contained.

"Is Poe now implying that even while his friend (former President Joseph) Estrada was in power, National Archives Director Ricardo Manapat was already working to alter his birth records? This will not even qualify as a believable movie script," Pichay said.

He said that even Mendoza, who submitted to the Supreme Court on Monday the army records of Poe's father which contradicted the documents he had submitted to the Comelec, knew Poe's records were not credible. *With a Reuters report*

Sandigan upholds Laya immunity in ill-gotten wealth cases

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has dismissed the graft charges filed against former Central Bank Governor Jaime C. Laya and other former top government officials in connection with a $65-million alleged behest loan to a local construction firm.

In a 15-page decision, the third division of the anti-graft court also upheld the immunity granted to Laya by the Presidential Commission on Good Government on April 5, 1990 which "embraces and extends to all criminal prosecutions."

In its decision, the court overruled the claim of state prosecutors that the PCGG deal with Laya was limited only to cases involving ill-gotten wealth.

"The grant of immunity in favor of accused Laya would be meaningless if we follow the posture of the prosecution. If the contention would be sustained, then the accused would be fried in his own fat, so to speak," the anti-graft court said.

It said that it would be the "height of unfairness and contrary to due process if a man is required to state what he knows even if it would incriminate him, is promised immunity if he talks freely, and is later charged on the testimony he gave under such promise of immunity."

The case, which was filed in 1995, accused Laya of conspiring with the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, former trade minister Roberto Ongpin and former Philippine Export and Foreign Loan Guarantee Corp. president Rosendo Bondoc in the approval of a government guarantee for a $65 million loan of the Construction and Development Corp. of the Philippines (CDCP) in March 1991.

Also charged was CDCP president Rodolfo Cuenca. But the anti-graft court later junked the charges filed against Cuenca when he entered into a separate immunity deal with the PCGG.

Masbate rebels give Ebdane fiery welcome

LEGAZPI CITY—Communist New People's Army guerrillas in Masbate gave visiting Philippine National Police Chief Hermogenes Ebdane a surprise welcome on Monday when the general came to bury seven policemen killed in an ambush.

Some 40 NPA rebels clashed for two hours with elements of the 5th Scout Rangers at about 1:30 p.m. in Barangay Kabitan, Mandaon, Masbate, resulting in the wounding of one soldier.

In Laguna, several rebels were wounded in an encounter with troopers in Barangay Tamala, San Marcelino point in Gen. Nakar, Quezon, at about 3 a.m. yesterday.

Ebdane attended the burial of seven policemen killed in a land-mine ambush staged by NPA rebels last week in Mandaon.

Another policeman killed in the Mandaon ambush was buried on Monday in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, said Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo, the Masbate police chief.

Mapalo said an indignation rally preceded the funeral of the slain policemen who received posthumous awards from Ebdane.

Ebdane yesterday appeared to be no longer interested in the ongoing peace talks with the communist rebels following the spate of attacks.

"If it's fighting they want, then so be it," an incensed Ebdane told reporters in Camp Crame, adding that the police was left with no choice but to react to the attacks.

Ebdane said there was also no reason now for the United States and other countries to take the Communist Party and NPA off their list of "foreign terrorist organizations."

In Iloilo City, presidential candidate Raul Roco yesterday asked the US to lift the terrorist tag on the CPP to lay the groundwork for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

"It's good for our American friends not to condemn any part of the political opposition in the country as terrorist," said Roco. ***Gil Francis G. Arevalo and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, with Christian V. Esguerra and Michael Lim Ubac***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 25, 2004
ASH WEDNESDAY

1st Reading: Joel 2:12-18
2nd Reading: 2 Cor 5:20-6:2
Gospel: Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people." If you do so, you do not gain anything from your Father in heaven. When you give something to the poor, do not have it trumpeted before you, as do those who want to be seen in the synagogues and in the streets in order to be praised by the people. I assure you, they have been already paid in full.

If you give something to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gift remains really secret. Your Father who sees what is kept secret, will reward you.

When you pray, do not be like those who want to be seen. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues or on street corners to be seen by everyone. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is with you in secret; and your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

When you fast, do not put on a miserable face as do the hypocrites. They put on a gloomy face, so people can see they are fasting. I tell you this: they have paid in full already. When you fast, wash your face and make yourself look cheerful, because you are not fasting for appearances or for people, but for your Father who sees beyond appearances. And your Father, who sees what is kept secret will reward you."

Commentary

"O ye wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your Neebour's fauts and folly!"

In Scots dialect and with nettling humor Bobbie Burns (1759-1796) castigated the "Unco Guid" (the Very Good). Oh you who are so good yourselves, so pious and so holy. He had suffered from these (he was on the point of having to emigrate) but he took his stand! With his ribald wit he made his persecutors the laughing-stock of the country. It was probably the only way to counter the dour Calvinism of his time. His was a wit that went to the heart of the matter (this time writing in English dialect!):

"How poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!"

(By "art" he meant techniques of preaching, not paintings on the walls—for there weren't any.)

Lent is not a time of depression-even though everything in the Liturgy is simplified and we try to simplify our own lives too. It is a time for returning to the heart. "Return to me with all your heart."

Anyone with a heart has also a sense of humor. Sometimes it's the only way we can live with ourselves. It's painful work to strip away the ego's defenses and projections, and we have to do it with good grace if it's to stay done. Notice how often the word "secret" occurs in today's reading. It is contrasted with "being seen." "Being seen" is about surfaces and appearances. The heart is about depth. (And all good humour comes from there too.)

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PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

71st Annual Convention

THEME:

"e-architecture@the INSTITUTE71.org"

Messages

Warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Architects on your 71st Annual National Convention.

I welcome your dedication to boost Philippine progress amidst our present economic challenges and opportunities. Our administration is committed to political stability and consistency of economic policies needed by professionals and the business community in promoting growth and competitiveness. Even as you promote the Filipino as a world-class professional and global worker, we expect you to achieve more success through more research on and investments technology and quality services.

Your theme, e-Architecture," underscores your drive for greater innovation and cooperation in meeting the challenges of your profession. Your example is a needed boost to Philippine investment and improving business climate. I urge you to intensify your efforts in creating more jobs, housing for the poor, and opportunities in the on poverty. Let us strengthen our partnership in attaining these laudable objectives.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

In behalf of the Professional Regulation Commission, I express my heartfelt felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Architects (PIA) on the occasion of their 71st Annual Convention.

In a changing business environment, it is imperative for professional organizations to constantly seek ways to enhance the competence and maximize the potentials of their members through continuing professional education. This is also essential in securing the competitiveness and survival of Filipino architects in this age of globalization and intense competition.

I am, therefore, elated that through this convention, the PIA once again displays its strong resolve to arm its members with expertise at par with the globally accepted standards as the theme "e-Architecture" demonstrates. The theme emphasizes the need to define a distinct brand of Filipino architecture by drawing inspiration from vital elements such as ecology, education, ethnicity and eclecticism.

For its part, the Commission will continue to nurture Filipino architects toward professional excellence through a customer-focused, technology propelled, vibrant, and dynamic professional regulation.

Once again congratulations and *Mabuhay!*

ANTONIETA FORTUNA-IBE
Chairperson,
Professional Regulation Commission

Urbanization is brought about by the intellectual elite, ideas, their sciences, and their fashion from abroad. Their exposure to global architecture and ideas creating a most sophisticated design culture pose great challenges to the architects of today.

In response to the above challenges, the Philippine Institute of Architects is holding its 71st Annual National Convention with an innovative theme "E-Architecture". While the essential functions of architecture is the art of designing and building structures, the prefix E on the theme stress the following significance;

Ecology - This would mean that in the process of designing and constructing structures, these buildings must consider the preservation of environment and the fast dwindling source of wood as construction materials.

Education - The architects must have an education oriented in the government's thrust for preservation of the environment and structural designs with the least requirements of wood.

Ethnicity - When adopting a structural design, the architect must consider the religion, the tribal, and cultural origin of the owner, and the area where the structure shall be put-up. Careful considerations of these factors shall eliminate wastes of time and resources.

Eclecticism - Would insure the best design for the proper utilization of the structure considering the aspects of ecology, and the ethnical aspects.

With these reorientation in the practice of Architecture as a profession, it is hoped that we shall have structures that shall be environment friendly while the user enjoys the aesthetics, the economy, and the convenience of all buildings to be constructed.

The Philippine Institute of Architects is congratulated for these reorientation in building designing and constructions.

Congratulations.

JOEL T. REYES
Governor, Palawan

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

THURSDAY • 26-FEB

Time	Activity
07:00 am	Working Breakfast-Updates
08:00 am	Check In of Con Committee at Asturias Hotel
09:00 am	Arrival/Check In of Delegates (Respective Hotels)
10:00 am	Group 1-City Tours Luzon/MM Delegates
12:00 pm	Lunch (Respective Hotels)
01:30 pm	Arrival/Check In of Delegates (Respective Hotels)
02:30 pm	Group 2-City Tours Vis/Min Delegates
04:00 pm	Opening of Exhibits: City Coliseum Honor Guest: Mrs. M.E. Hagedorn Day Chairmen: Cris Cyril Abbu, FPIA & Marie Zuzette Loyola, PIA
07:00 pm	Welcome Dinner Affair hosted by Mayor Edward Hagedorn (Asturias Hotel)

FRIDAY • 27-FEB

Time	Activity
06:00 am	Breakfast (Respective Hotels)
07:00 am	Eucharistic Celebration (Asturias Hotel) Section in Charge: Cavite
08:30 am	Opening Ceremonies (Grand Ballroom, Asturias Hotel) Keynote Speaker: Hon. Mayor E.S. Hagedorn
10:00 am	Plenary Sessions and Luncheon Product Presentations
10:15 am	Plenary Session 1 Speaker: Dr. Antonio F. Mateo, Ph.D. Architects Design Creativity: A Key to Water Crisis Prevention & Environmental Protection
11:15 am	Plenary Session II Speaker: Mr. Manuel D. Gerochi The Role of the Filipino Architects in Achieving Ecological and Physical Balance Between the Natural and Built Environments
12:20 pm	Lunch and Product Presentation I-Jardine Schindler Corp. Product Presentation II-Dutch Boy Phils.
02:30 pm	Plenary Session III Speaker: Mrs. Marylou C. Ventura, PIA Puerto Aventura, The Village Resort: Concept of Enduring Ethnicity, Elemental and Ecological Conservation and Endogenously Evolving Vernacular Architecture
04:30 pm	Exhibit Viewing at Puerto Princesa Coliseum
07:30 pm	Palawan Nights: Cocktails & Fellowship Night Lanai Court, Legend Hotel

SATURDAY • 28-FEB

Time	Activity
06:00 am	Breakfast (Respective Hotels)
07:30 am	(All Activities will be at Legend Hotel)
08:00 am	Product Presentation (5 simultaneous presentation, 30 mins each in the Function Rooms)
10:00 am	Snacks
12:00 pm	Lunch & Product Presentation American Standard
01:30 pm	Business Meeting & Election of Officers Day Chairman: Augusto C. Galang, FPIA
03:15 pm	Snacks
04:00 pm	Exhibit Viewing
07:00 pm	Eucharistic Celebration Sponsoring Section: Ilocos
08:00 pm	Honor Dinner: Induction of New Board of Directors and Closing Ceremonies (Asturias Hotel) Guest Speaker: Gov. Joel T. Reyes Day Chairman: Augusto C. Galang, FPIA

SUNDAY • 29-FEB

Time	Activity
05:00 am	Breakfast (Respective Hotel)
06:00 am	Leave for Sabang Beach/Underground River Day Chairman: Manuel E. Icasas, FPIA
09:00 am	Games, Trip to Underground River
12:00 pm	Lunch
01:30 pm	Games/Trip to Underground River
03:30 pm	Leave Sabang Beach
04:00 pm	Egress of Exhibitors
07:00 pm	Luau Dinner at Arch. M. Ventura's Beach Resort Day Chairman: Art & Marylou Ventura
08:00 pm	Free Night

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Messages

The Philippine Institute of Architects, on its 71 years of existence, will hold the Annual Convention on February 26 up to March 1 year 2004 in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

The theme "e-architecture@the INSTITUTE71.org" is very appropriate because all of us are very much concerned about the preservation of planet earth. Palawan, the site of the convention being the last frontier of our country, home to flora and fauna, very rich in natural resources and abundant in scenic places will provide us with genuine eco-tourism exposure opportunities.

The Institute in living up to the needs of the time, wishes to create awareness, positive actions and sense of responsibility to save mother nature and eventually save our planet earth.

Fellow architects, colleagues and friends in the construction industry, in behalf of the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Architects, I enjoin you to actively participate in our forthcoming convention in Puerto Princesa City, the Princess of the South. We hope to make this convention a memorable one, with a comprehensive program of education fellowship and camaraderie.

ORLANDO C. VILLARIN, FPIA
President
Philippine Institute of Architects

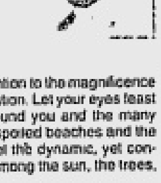
Welcome and congratulations to the PIA 71st Annual National Convention. The College of Fellows would like to greet all its members and delegates from all over the country for this unusual ecological and architectural extravagance that will enchant us for six magical days of the radiant beauty of Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

The Philippine Institute of Architects has chosen Palawan to share with its members, one of our country's most beautiful creation of Mother Earth. The Human reaching for the Divine.

Palawan known for its simplicity and beauty stretches some 600 kilometers down to its sea border with Borneo; with which it holds more in common geologically and biologically than the rest of the Philippines. Thanks to a landbridge Palawan and Borneo shared some 50,000 years ago. The earliest evidence of man in the Philippines has been found in Palawan. Tabon Caves in southwest of Palawan dates human habitation from around 63,000 years ago. Our Palawan Convention will give us an insight of the earliest Filipino cave-dwelling architecture, its pristine beaches and islands, as one of the many surprises the convention has stored for us.

The College of Fellows and the lovely Princess of Palawan wishes Mabuhay to the Philippine Institute of Architects and the hardworking members of the Convention Committee for this historic event.

RAMON MA. ZARAGOZA, FPIA
Chancellor
College of Fellows



Our warmest greetings and felicitations to the officers, members and friends of the Philippine Institute of Architects (PIA) on the occasion of your 71st Annual National Convention here in our beloved city of Puerto Princesa. To be so visited by the planners and designers of development is truly an honor for us.

While here, we invite your attention to the magnificence of the Ultimate Architect's creation. Let your eyes feast on the lush virgin forests around you and the many exotic wildlife within it; the unspoiled beaches and the rich marine life beyond it. Feel the dynamic, yet constant, balance between and among the sun, the trees, the animals, and the seas.

Then you might believe in the structural strength of a construction design that has made symbiosis its cornerstone. In the same way that beams alone cannot stand without the columns, neither can animals – including its human version – survive without the trees and the greens. Denude the forests and you weaken the entire life-support system of humanity. Enrich them and you enrich life.

And as you discover again the glory that is nature, we exhort you – the architects and urban planners and developers of the country – to reexamine closely this architectural handwork of God, and learn from it.

As you sit before your drawing boards to design the *obra-maestra* of your careers - under the theme "e-Architecture" for ecology, education, ethnicity and eclecticism - we hope that you get inspiration from this perfect architectural work that God, in His almighty wisdom, has personally designed.

Thank you very much for the honor of your presence. Mabuhay po kayo!

EDWARD S. HAGEDORN
Mayor, Puerto Princesa City

Oil well attack not part of war games—AFP

By Alcuin Papa

MILITARY officials yesterday said the ongoing joint military exercises with United States forces in Palawan were not intended to protect from possible terrorist attack the vital Malampaya gas field in the South China Sea.

Brig. Gen. Rafael Romero, the Filipino director of the exercises, branded as "speculation" published reports that the joint exercises this year would focus on repulsing an attack on the $4.5 billion Camago-Malampaya offshore platform, the single biggest foreign investment project in the country.

US and Filipino troops on Monday began two weeks of annual war games, called the Balikatan '04, against simulated "conventional and non-conventional" adversaries in the north and west of the country, including Palawan Island near the Malampaya fields.

But Romero told reporters that Philippine and US military planners were not using contingency measures against an attack on the Malampaya project jointly operated by Shell Philippines Exploration (Spex) with Chevron Texaco. The state-run Philippine National Oil Corp. has a 10 percent stake in the project.

"That's nothing. It's speculation. It's only incidental that Malampaya is in Palawan. This exercise has got nothing to do with Malampaya. This exercise has not been prepared for Malampaya security. We are not having this Balikatan because of Malampaya," Romero said in a phone interview from Puerto Princesa City in Palawan.

But while a Malampaya attack scenario was not part of the war games, Romero said with terrorism, "anything is possible" and the security of Malampaya "could be discussed" during the exercises.

Concern

"The security of Malampaya is a concern. But as [AFP Chief] Gen. Narciso Abaya said, there is no existing threat and Malampaya is not the subject of the exercise. If it comes, the product of the training can be used [to secure Malampaya], but the training itself is not necessarily for Malampaya," he said.

Romero explained that the exercises in Palawan were "just scenario-driven" but refused to elaborate.

He said the exercises would be confined to the AFPs' Western Command headquarters in Puerto Princesa City.

"We will not go out of the camp. It will only be table-top exercises and no actual [maneuvers]. If we are going to test it, we will stay here. There will be no live fire, only planning," Romero said.

Marvi Trudeau, the program manager of Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc., said her office did not know of any plan to focus the Balikatan exercises on Malampaya.

"Since we are just a contractor in the project, we were not officially asked about this," she said.

But the INQUIRER learned that the head of Spex security, Martin Castle, was in town to give a briefing regarding security at Malampaya at the request of US and Philippine military.

Maj. Michael Samson of the AFP's public affairs office said he had not heard of a meeting or briefing with Castle.

War games

In a press briefing in Puerto Princesa, Maj. Cresencio Ferrer, civic-military operations officer of the Balikatan exercises, said the war games in Palawan have nothing to do with Malampaya.

"Palawan as a site was decided by the Mutual Defense Treaty Board. The Balikatan '04 is not in any way connected with the protection of the Malampaya platform," he said.

He added that if that were the case, it would not be made public for security reasons.

Ferrer said his group was in Palawan for civic and humanitarian assistance which has already started in 21 barangays in Puerto Princesa.

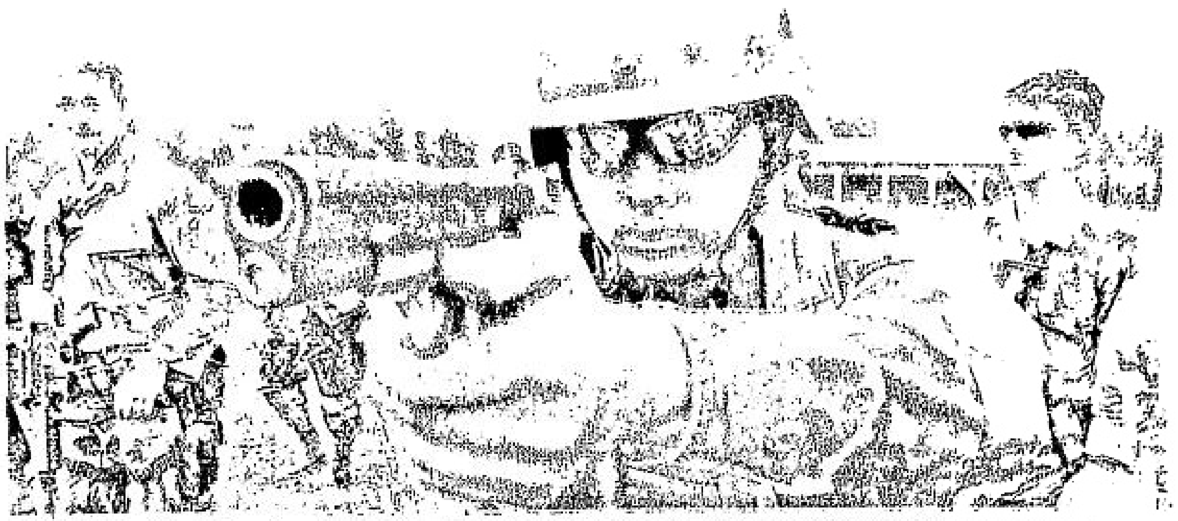
According to Lt. Col. Mike Ertman, the cost of the civic-military assistance project was about P5.2 million.

A local monitoring team has been formed in coordination with local government units, according to a foreign affairs department representative.

The Malampaya project is operated by a consortium led by Spex, a unit of the Royal/Dutch Shell Group. Spex and Chevron Texaco have a combined 90-percent stake in the consortium with both parties having a 45 percent stake each. The state-run PNOC Exploration Corp. holds 10 percent.

The Malampaya field, which has recoverable reserves of 70.8 billion cubic meters of gas and 85 million barrels of condensate, now fuels three power stations with a combined capacity of 2,700 megawatts.

Palawan is near the potentially mineral-rich Spratlys, which are being claimed in whole or in part by the Philippines, Brunei, China, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam. *With a report from Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and AFP*



A FILIPINO soldier takes aim with his .45-caliber pistol while US soldiers look on during close-quarters dry fire exercises in the Army's Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija as part of this year's RP-US Balikatan "war games." AP

Pinoy twins doing well, going home

NEW YORK—Twin brothers from the Philippines who are joined at the top of their heads are recovering "beyond our best expectations" from the third major operation in their gradual separation process, Montefiore Medical Center said.

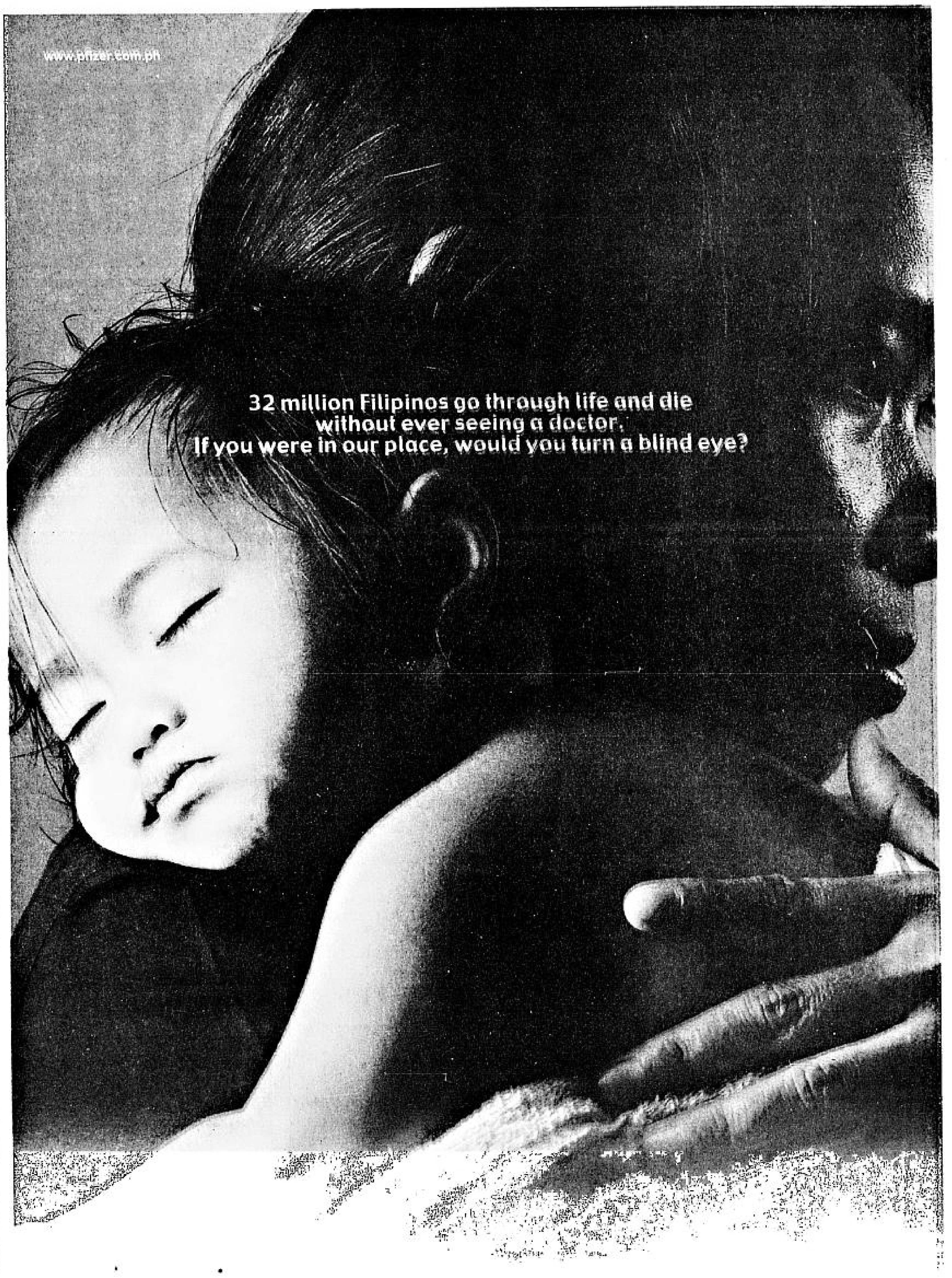
Three days after surgery, Carl and Clarence Aguirre were well enough to leave the hospital for Blythedale Children's Hospital in Valhalla, where they and their mother, Arlene, stay between operations, Montefiore spokesman Steve Osborne said Monday. Both hospitals and the medical team are donating their services.

On Friday, surgeons operated to divide blood vessels near the boys' brains and said 72 hours would have to pass before the greatest danger of bleeding and seizures was past. But they didn't even wait that long before deciding to release the 22-month-old brothers.

Osborne quoted Dr. James Goodrich, the lead neurosurgeon, as saying that the boys "are doing beautifully, they're back at their pre-op status, there are no neurological problems at all." And Dr. David Staffenberg, chief of pediatric plastic surgery, described their recovery as "beyond our best expectations," according to Osborne.

Osborne said that when he looked in on the brothers Monday morning, they were "bright-eyed" and playing with a toy.

The twins face at least one more operation before their separation is complete, then more surgery—as separate patients—to reconstruct their skulls. No schedule has been set, Osborne said. *AP*



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One day, not only will everyone in our country have access to healthcare, our communities will also be made safe from disease. On our fiftieth year, we do what we can to make every Filipino life healthier, longer and happier.

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RP inks 'open skies' cargo deal

By Clarissa S. Batino

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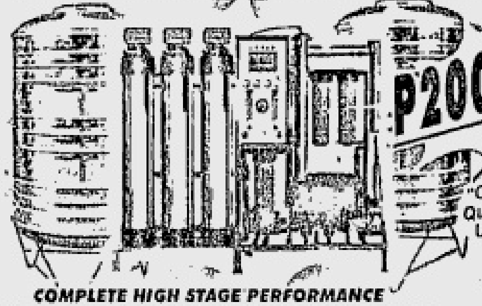

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The Diploma Program in Professional Events Management is composed of 6 core courses that focus on the different stages in the creation of a professional event. The application of these core courses is further strengthened through the introduction of elective courses catering to the specific fields of interest/specialization needed by the individual. This is followed by a two-month period of on-the-job-training (or the equivalent of 300 hours) to apply the theories and best practices learned inside the classroom. The culminating activity is the presentation of one's own event portfolio to an evaluatory panel. The successful completion of all the prescribed requirements of each certificate module entitles the participant to a Certificate of Achievement, while the completion of the six (6) core courses, two (2) elective courses, OJT and event portfolio presentation entitles the participant to a Diploma in Professional Events Management.

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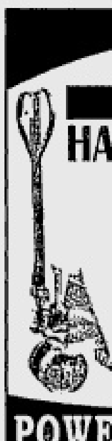

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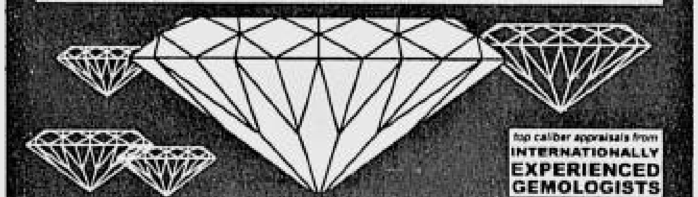

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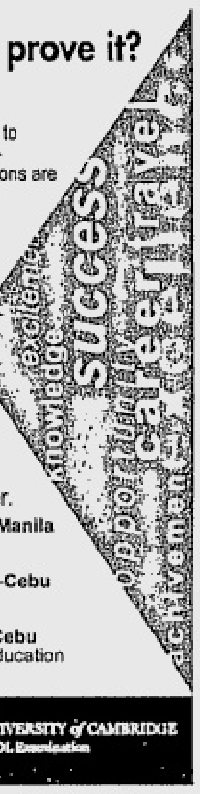

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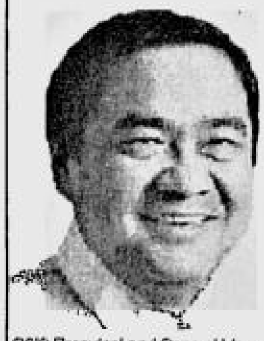
For more details, please visit the GSIS Main Office or your nearest GSIS Branch/ District Office or contact Emma, Nelda, Meljune and/or Marisa of the GSIS-HRDD Scholarship Staff at Tel. Nos. 551-1878 or 891-6161 locals 4862/4863.

Application deadline: 2 April 2004.



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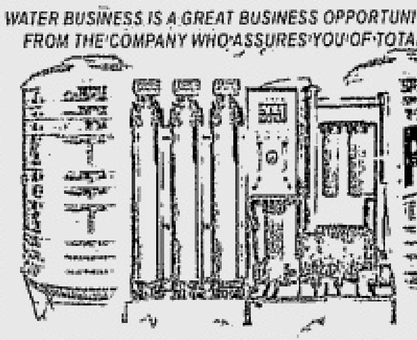

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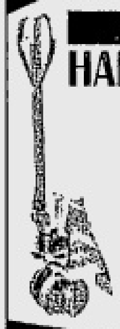

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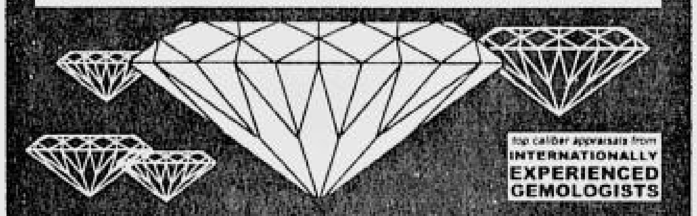

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SC asked to unseat 2 poll commissioners

By Philip C. Tubeza

TWO opposition-linked lawyers yesterday asked the Supreme Court to void the appointment of two new election commissioners, alleging that they were "at the mercy" of President Macapagal-Arroyo and would "only [be] used" by Malacañang for the May elections.

Lawyers Agripino C. Baybay III and Paulino Ungos III urged the high tribunal to unseat Commmission on Elections commissioners Virgilio Garcillano and Manuel Barcelona Jr. since their ad interim or temporary appointments were allegedly "legally and constitutionally defective."

"Commissioners with temporary appointments are not expected to be impartial; they are in the meantime, temporary and in danger of being replaced anytime, and would do anything at the bidding of the appointing authority," the petition said.

The petitioners accused the President of unconstitutional use and abuse of her appointing powers.

"By appointing respondent appointees to the Comelec haphazardly and in a manner which is constitutionally suspect, it is an inevitable conclusion that she has utilized a presidential prerogative to serve partisan purposes, and that is a clear abuse of discretion," they said.

The petitioners asked the tribunal to issue a temporary restraining order while it hears the case.

Demaree Raval, a lawyer on the staff of opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara, was with the two petitioners when they submitted their petition to the high court yesterday.

Garcillano and Barcelona were appointed to replace retired commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco and Ralph Lantion, whose terms expired on Feb. 2.

But the appointments came under heavy criticism after Garcillano was accused of involvement in election irregularities in Mindanao and Barcelona, who is allegedly close to First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, was revealed to have allegedly contributed to the campaign kitty of the President in the 1998 elections.

"To allow [the appointees] to discharge their functions despite the lingering question on the validity of their appointments, coupled with widespread and commonly held perception that they are politically indebted to President Arroyo, who is herself a presidential candidate, may result in the erosion of the credibility of the Comelec, thereby casting doubts on the regularity of the elections that it will administer," the petitioners said.

They noted that Garcillano and Barcelona submitted separate comments to the SC supporting the disqualification case against opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. although they did not participate in the deliberations that led the Comelec's dismissal of the case.

"It betrays the eagerness of Garcillano and Barcelona to please the appointing power who is running for president," they said.

The petitioners said the President knew fully well that her two appointees would not be confirmed by the congressional Commission of Appointments since she appointed them on Feb. 7, or a day after Congress had adjourned.

"President Arroyo exercised her appointing authority with the obvious effort to thwart the constitutionally enshrined check-and-balance [system] of submitting her appointments for confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. The manner and timing of the issuance of their appointments were resorted to as a way of sidestepping the CA in the appointment process," they said.

They noted that the CA will not be able to scrutinize the appointments since Congress will resume its session on May 24 only for the "exclusive purpose of convening as a presidential Board of Canvassers."

They said the President clearly "intended the appointments to be merely temporary, and to last only until June 11, 2004 when the appointments will lapse" after the adjournment of Congress.

They said Garcillano and Barcelona were "given a fixed term (of less than the period set by the Constitution) by executive fiat through an irregular exercise of ad interim appointments."

This was "unconstitutional as it renders inutile the confirming powers of the CA," they said.

Besides Garcillano and Barcelona, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo was also named as a respondent in the petition.

Now it's 70, next year it'll be back to 75

PUBLIC school teachers and students better get used to the new grading system.

Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus said he would reinstate the passing grade to 75 next year.

"Of course, next year," he told school principals and superintendents last Friday.

Last October, the Department of Education raised the grading standards.

It did away with the use of a "transmutation table" that allows students to pass even with very low test scores.

At the same time the DepEd raised the passing grade from 70 to 75 .

Recently, the department brought the passing mark back to 70 because many public school students flunked under the new system.

At Friday's dialog, the school officials questioned why the new rules were imposed in the middle of the school year.

They asked for time to let the teachers, students and parents get used to the new system.

Some teachers earlier asked the DepEd to further lower the passing grade to 50.

But De Jesus told them the transition period ends this school year.

He said they need to know "whether students are actually learning."

"That's why we can't afford not to touch the grading system. We have to make the changes as soon as possible," he said.

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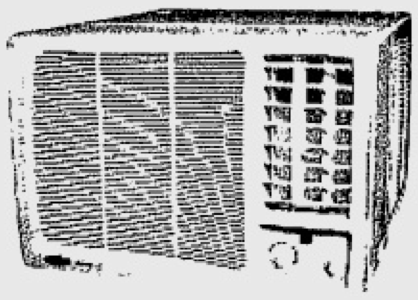
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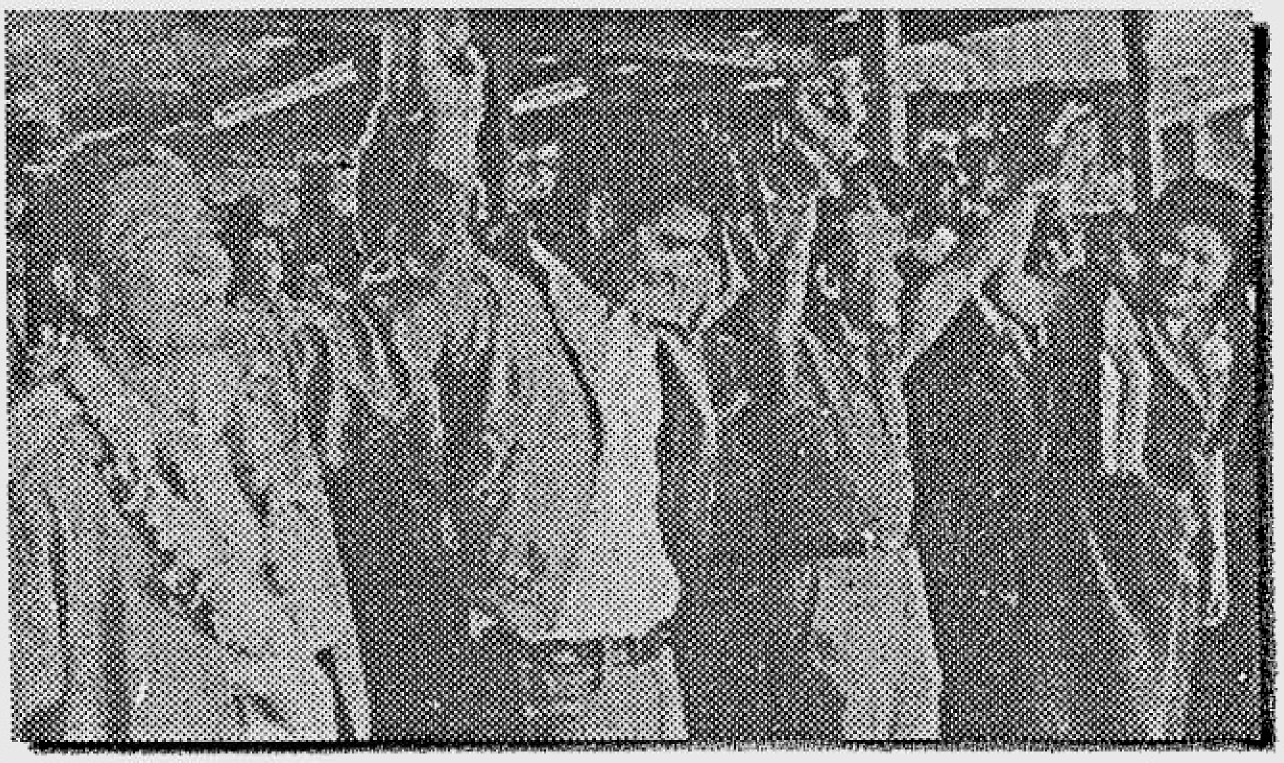
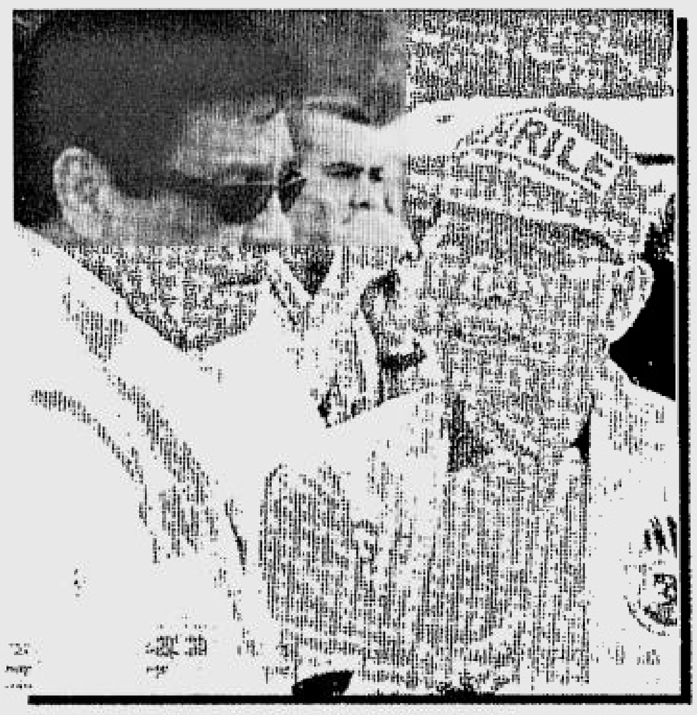
Isang bukas na liham kay FPJ:

Ronnie, Huwag Muling Pagamit sa Mga Bulok na Pulitiko!

25 Pebrero 2004

Sa 'idol ng masa:'





Sa itaas, itinataas ni FPJ ang kamay nina Marcos at Tolentino noong 'snap elections' noong 1986 sa isang rali sa Del Pan Tondo. (Kuha ni Albert Garcia ng Tempo.) Sa ibaba, binubulungan ni Enrile si FPJ, na ngayon ay kandidato sa pagkapangulo.

NOONG 1986, ginamit ka ng desperadong rehimeng Marcos upang maipagpatuloy ang paghahari nito, na sa loob ng mahigit dalawang dekada ay malagim at masidhing sinikil ang ating mga demokratikong karapatan, at walang pakundangang dinambong ang kaban ng bayan.

Ginamit ni Marcos ang pag-iidolo at pagsamba sa iyo ng masa. Sa tantiya niya, iboboto siya ng taumbayan sa pamamagitan ng iyong pag-iindorso. Di nga ba't itinaas mo pa ang kamay ng diktador sa isang rali sa Del Pan, Tondo noong Enero 26, 1986?

Ngunit hindi nagtagumpay si Marcos. Noong Pebrero 22, 1986, pumutok ang People Power Revolution sa EDSA, at noong Pebrero 25, 1986 ay nagpabagsak sa diktadurya ni Marcos, eksaktong 18 taon na ang nakararaan sa araw na ito.

NOONG 1998, ginamit ka rin ni Erap. Dahil sa iyong suporta, madali siyang naluklok sa Malacanang. Pero tulad ni Marcos, sinayang niya ang iyong suporta. Siya rin ay nagpasasa lamang sa kanyang posisyon. At tulad ni Marcos, ibinagsak din si Erap sa poder ng taumbayan, at ngayon ay nasa bilangguan.

NGAYONG 2004: Ginagamit ka na naman ng mga bulok na pulitiko.

Alam naming mabuti kang tao, Ronnie, at maaring tapat ang hangarin mong tumulong sa bayan. Nguni't alam mo namang wala kang karanasan, at wala kang sapat na paghahanda para pamunuan ang 82 milyong Pilipino.

Hangarin mo mang tulungan ang kaibigang mong si Erap, magagalit ang taumbayan kung pakikialaman mo ang mga korte upang makalaya si Erap.

Sa kaibuturan ng iyong puso, alam mo na ang iboboto ng taumbayan ay HINDI ang iyong tunay katauhan bilang Ronald Allan Poe. Alam mo na ang kanilang susuportahan ay ang BAYANI, ang AGILA at ang PANDAY, o si TOTOY BATO at iba pang karakter na ginampanan mo sa mga pelikula.

Subalit alam mo din na iba ang sinehan at pelikula. Ibang-iba ang mga totoo at kumplikadong istorya at problema ng bayan. Sa totoong buhay, hindi puwedeng sunud-sunuran ka lamang sa mga pulitiko at mga iyong mga tagapayo, tulad ng pagsunod ng isang artista sa direktor ng pelikula. Matitigas din ang ulo ng mga adbenturista sa militar at pulisya at kilusang komunista at terorista. Hindi mo sila basta-basta mapapasunod sa iyong iskrip, gaano man ito kaganda at kahusay, Ronnie. Sa halip, ikaw ang kanilang pilit paaartehin alinsunod sa kani-kanilang mga interes, iskrip at direksyon!

Tingnan mo uli ang mga pulitikong nakapaligid sa iyo. Mga luma't ibinasurang kabarkada nina Marcos at Erap. Panay ang lantarang pambobola nila sa iyo. Kesyo ikaw daw ang tanging pag-asa at tagapagligtas ng bayan. Pero sa totoo, gusto lamang nilang isulong ang mga pansariling interes sa pamamagitan ng paggamit sa iyo. Masdan mo din ang mga retiradong heneral na kunwaring sumusporta sa iyo. Marami sa kanila ang naging berdugo ng diktadurang Marcos.

Sila ba ay tutulong sa pagkakaisa ng ating mamamayan, gayong sila ang sanhi ng halos pagkawasak ng ating bayan? Ilan sa kanila ang maituturing na talagang tapat ang hangarin? Hindi ba't marami dito naglalaway lamang na makabalik sa poder, upang muling mangurakot at mang-abuso. Tuso at magugulang ang mga ito, Ronnie. Lolokohin ka lang ng mga ito. Gagamitin ka lamang at ang iyong pangalan.

Maganda ang iyong pangalan, Ronnie. Huwag mo itong sirain.

NANGANGAMBA kami para sa demokrasya. Nangagamba kaming baka muling uusbong at maghahari sa ating sa bayan ang isang panibagong bersyon ng gobyernong Marcos-militar. Baka nga hindi na tayo muling sisikatan ng araw.

Walang 'take two' sa pagiging pangulo ng bansa. Sa isang pagkakamali mo lamang bilang presidente, tiyak na magkakagulo na ang bayan. Ito ay pagbabalakan at aantayin ng mga mga adbenturista sa militar at mga oportunistang pulitiko. Tiwala silang madali ka nilang patumbahin. Hangad nila laging mamuno at magtatag ng sariling administrasyon na labag sa Konstitusyon.

Ronnie, huwag kang pagamit! Maawa ka sa bayan. Maawa ka sa ating demokrasya.

Sumasaiyo,
Kaisahan ng Mamamayan para sa Bayan
(KAISAMBAYAN)

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

'Da King' snubs debate

From page A1

essary, a stunt double.

This was the suggestion of Bulacan Rep. Willie B. Villarama after the actor's camp snubbed a meeting set yesterday to lay the groundwork for a televised debate, during which the five other presidential aspirants registered through their representatives.

"We exerted the same effort (on) all the candidates. They should answer that," Henrietta de Villa of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) said when asked why no one from the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino was around.

The Commission on Elections and PPCRV, a citizens' group accredited for the May 10 elections by the poll body, are hosting a planned two-and-a-half hour debate to be aired April 13 on Channel 5.

If FPJ does not show up then, the PPCRV said, a vacant seat with his name on it will be "prominently displayed" during the proceedings.

Earlier reports said Poe wanted the debate to be held in a slum area. The organizers said they could not act on this condition since the request was not formally addressed to them.

De Villa gave the KNP the benefit of the doubt. Party officials might have run out of time to respond to PPCRV's invitation, she said, "since everybody is busy campaigning."

But presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye made it to the meeting for President Macapagal-Arroyo, and former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez-Tan for Raul Roco. Also present were lawyers for Bro. Eddie Villanueva and Sen. Panfilo Lacson, and Manuel Santos for Eddie Gil.

Poe, a high school dropout said to be leading the presidential race, earlier brushed aside all challenges to engage in public discussions, saying debates were divisive and did nothing to help the masses, his support base.

In a statement, Villarama said Poe might be a little more cooperative if allowed the "movie mechanisms" he was used to as an actor. Ousted President Joseph Estrada could direct the debate, the lawmaker said, and Poe should be given until "take 100" during the proceedings. The "final option" was a stunt double, Villarama said, suggesting Sen. Eduardo Angara, "who pushed very hard for Poe to run."

Actually, there is hope. Rep. Francis Escudero of Sorsogon (1st District), spokesperson for Poe, said their camp recognized the need for a debate. "If you ask me, I think he should participate," Escudero said.

The other candidates had conditions, too.

In yesterday's meeting at the Comelec office, it was initially agreed that each speaker would have three minutes to deliver an opening statement, two minutes during each of the three rounds to discuss his stand, and another minute for the closing statement.

The debate would be bilingual, and questions would be formulated by representatives of the Comelec and the PPCRV.

But Bunye said Malacañang would bat for longer air time and suggest that the issues be broken up and discussed in three debates instead of just one. He took the cue from Ms Macapagal who said the focus should be on economic, political and social concerns.

In a statement yesterday, Ms Macapagal said she wanted the debate to steer clear of personal attacks: "I do not want to, and I shall not, disparage anybody."

Villanueva said he was more than willing to face any or all of his "rivals" in a "real and professional" debate with "fixed rules and regulations." In short, he stressed: "Not just shouting."

During an interview at the University of the Philippines in Diliman on Monday, Villanueva said he would go anywhere for the discussions, even to FPJ's favored slum areas, "because I am very sure of my platform and I want to present it to the masses."

From Iloilo, Raul Roco's Alyansa ng Pag-Asa went a step further. It was Roco that issued the first challenge to a presidential debate. Yesterday, his running mate Hermie Aquino and the party's senatorial candidates dared their counterparts to face them in separate public discussions.

Aquino personally "invited" his rivals Senators Loren Legarda and Noli de Castro to a "stand-alone" VP faceoff. Lawyer Frank Chavez said the 54 other senatorial candidates should be prepared to take on Roco's "Ocean's 7" ticket "in any forum … once on weekends, and twice on weekdays."

PDI-GMA 7 debate

During a press briefing at the Hotel Del Rio, Roco also lauded the Inquirer and GMA 7 for planning to jointly host a presidential debate next month. Four presidential candidates—Ms Macapagal, Roco, Lacson and Villanueva—have confirmed their participation. Roco said media was the "magnifying glass" that would help the people see all the candidates' "wrinkles and pimples."

Election Commissioner Resurreccion Borra clarified that other media networks are allowed to mount presidential debates, provided they coordinate with the poll body.

He said the April debate to be hosted by the Comelec and PPCRV might be aired on all television and radio stations. *Michael Lim Ubac and Gil Cabacungan Jr. with a report from Agence France-Presse*

22 manta …

From page A1

delivery vehicle, an Isuzu Elf with plate number WTR-161. The task force was composed of representatives from the Quezon Provincial Agriculture Office, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, police and Tanggol Kalikasan.

The manta rays, also known as the birds of the sea, came from San Francisco town in the Bondoc Peninsula.

The manta rays, along with several styrofoam boxes of assorted fishes, were about to be delivered to the fish port in Barangay Dalahican in time for the afternoon market trading.

Driver Fernando de Una, a resident of Barangay Casay in San Francisco, identified the owner of the cargo as a certain Danny Tan, also from San Francisco town.

De Una said the manta rays were caught in the waters off San Francisco in Tayabas Bay. The largest of the seized manta rays weighed at least 50 kg and the smallest, 15 kg. Task Force Matatag required the use of a payloader to transfer the seized manta rays to a dump truck.

Under Fisheries Administrative Order No. 193, the owner of the cargo and the driver face criminal charges, according to Tanggol Kalikasan area director Asis Perez. The administrative order prohibits the selling, possession, poaching, transporting and exporting of whale sharks and manta rays.

Based on the files of the International Conservation Union (ICU), an international watchdog of endangered species, Tanggol Kalikasan said the manta ray, also called a "flattened out shark," is considered a "threatened" sea creature.

"The manta rays are now being heavily poached due to the increasing demand for their meat, which, eaters believe, has potent curative value. The meat commands high prices in high-end Chinese restaurants where it is being served as an exotic delicacy with aphrodisiac properties," Perez said.

The ICU said manta rays were hunted principally for their gill rakers, the most expensive part of the marine fish. The gill rakers are exported to Japan and Hong Kong for their medicinal value.

The manta ray is considered one of the five largest species of fish in the world. It can grow up to eight meters wide and weigh up to more than 400 kg.

The seized manta rays were distributed to at least three local jails in Lucena City and Pagbilao as food for the inmates.

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PAFP marks 43rd year

MESSAGES

My warmest felicitations to the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians on your 43rd Anniversary and Annual Convention.

I laud your commitment to make quality medical and health services available to our people. The theme, "The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances," underscores your commitment to raise to global standards the state of our health and medical services. By promoting the health of the Filipino family, you help them overcome poverty and achieve a better quality of life.

Our national efforts and cooperation enabled us to prevent the spread of SARS. But the threats of SARS and other diseases here and abroad continue. We must therefore sustain our gains in medical preparedness and quality healthcare. I welcome your efforts to upgrade competencies in your medical field and your dedication as dynamic and socially conscious medical practitioners of our country.

Let us strengthen our partnership in making quality medicines and medical services more affordable to our people.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President, Republic of the Philippines

Firstly, allow me to extend my warm felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, Inc. (PAFP) on the occasion of your 43rd Anniversary and 2004 Annual Convention.

Secondly, your theme, *"The Compassionate Family Physicians Amidst Technological Advances"* conjures images of altruism that is coupled with the sense of mission to effectively and efficiently address the health needs of the Filipino people.

Turning a new leaf as you add another year of dedicated service, PAFP marks another milestone in its history by making a bold initiative to conduct its 2004 Annual Convention to further enhance the knowledge and skills of its members. I find this move fitting and proper as you gear up your organization to become more responsive to our people's local health needs as well as competently handle the challenges of adapting to rapid technological advances in an increasingly global community.

Lastly, I commend your association as it continues to serve with excellence in providing quality health care and patient-centered services. The 43 years of quality care and dedicated service is already a realization of a vision that will serve as an inspiration to all your members.

Congratulations and *Mabuhay kayong Lahat!*

Manuel M. Dayrit, MD
Secretary, Department of Health

The City of Manila congratulates the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians on its 43rd Anniversary and Annual Convention on Februay 26-28, 2004 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

The City recognizes its vital role as catalyst for change in the attainment of goals and policies in support of Responsible Parenthood. It takes an affirmative stand on pro-life issues and firmly believes that the Family, being the basic unit of society, has an important role in the comprehensive development of its citizenry.

The City ensures that excesses in modernization will not endanger the health and moral integrity of the family. It acknowledges this noble endeavor as requiring great conviction, unceasing advocacy, unflagging patience, perseverance and persistence.

No one among the various professional careers is given the high esteem of trusting the lives of people except the family physician who is an active and caring advocate of life.

The Convention theme *"The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances"* is very relevant to the convictions of the City's *"Buhayin ang Maynila"* program in protecting the family and promoting the sanctity of life.

May you be one in this struggle.

MABUHAY!

Jose L. Atienza, Jr.
Mayor of Manila

With sentiments of camaraderie and fellowship, we, the Officers and Board of Governors of the Philippine Medical Association, heartily greet the offi-cers and members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, Inc., on the occasion of its 43rd Anniversary and Annual Convention.

It feels truly gratifying that we at the PMA are made to share in the PAFP celebration of this auspicious event marking another milestone of progress and achievements. Your theme, *"The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances"*, we commend for its optimistic outlook in healthcare. Your quest for excellence has made significant strides in the training and experience of family physicians through major advances in the diagnosis and treatment of various ailments. We also hail your scientific program that features cutting edge topics, covering a kaleidoscope of disciplines. We join you in looking forward to an unqualified success of this convention and anniversary.

Congratulations. Mabuhay ang Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, Inc.

Jose T. Sanchez, MD
President, Philippine Medical Association

The Philippine Academy of Family Physicians takes pride in welcoming participants and guests in its 43rd Anniversary and Annual Convention, with the theme "The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances."

The convention will highlight the family physicians' second self of being sympathetic and warm to patients and their families, their being compassionate. Technological advances are developments Family Medicine has in common with all specialties, but as Family Physicians we would like to be distinct in being compassionate. The Organizing Committee has seen fit to come out with sessions that will highlight relevant issues and advances. At the same time it screened family case presentations that shall bring out the true Family Physician that we consider ideal.

Let us take this opportunity not only to learn and be updated but to meet friends and renew ties.

Lastly, our gratitude to our supporters and friends who have continuously been with us all these years in our quest to establish our mark as a leading specialty.

Again, welcome and mabuhay!

Reynaldo A. Olazo, MD
President

I take pride and pleasure in welcoming you all to the 43rd Annual Convention of the Philippine Acade-my of Family Physicians. It promises to be perhaps the largest meeting of family doctors ever held since we have not had our midyear convention last year.

With the theme: "The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances," the organizing committee has prepared a scientific program that will surely update the participants on the latest newest treatments and technologies. Some of the best minds have been invited to share their knowledge and expertise on a variety of subjects.

Staging this convention has been both a challenge and an achievement for the organizers. The Organizing Committee has been putting a lot of hard work to make the affair an exciting experience to meet new innovations, better diagnostic tools, promising therapeutic interventions, research outputs, interesting family cases, creative works of minds willing to share their projects and poster sessions.

It is a great opportunity to interact with fellow family physicians from different parts of our country - their particular problems and solutions in sustaining the delivery of modern quality care with the noble view of helping reduce the financial burden of the less fortunate segment of our society.

I am confident this convention will provide opportunities for advancement through leadership in family medicine practice.

Soraya P. Abubakar, MD
Overall Chair, 43rd Annual Convention

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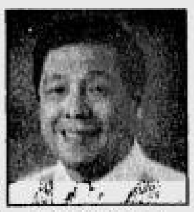

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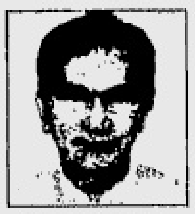

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CONVENTION TOPICS

- The Compassionate Family Physician from the Health Social Sciences Point of View
- Priorities in Health Research and Development in the Philippines
- Models of TB DOTS Implementation
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Diabetes in Children
- Diabetic Neuropathy
- Sexually Transmitted Infections: Syndromic Approach
- Complications in Children Born from Mothers with STI
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Colonic Cancer
- Meningoencephalitis in Children
- Pediatric Epilepsy Syndromes
- Arrythmia
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Screening High Risk Pregnancies
- Pregnancy-Induced Hypertension
- Contraceptive Self-Reliance Program
- Updates on Osteoporosis
- Rehabilitation in Soft Tissue Rheumatism
- Stress-Related Dermatoses
- Anti-aging Modalities
- Fall in the Elderly
- Prevention, Diagnosis & Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease
- Cumulative Trauma Disorders
- ECC Benefits
- Near Drowning
- Fluid Replacement Therapy in Emergency Situations
- Clinical Experiences on Isolation & Care of Suspected Avian Flu Patients
- Pain Management: An Overview
- Innovative Residency Training in Family Medicine
- Developing Health Education
- Pharmacoeconomics
- PhilHealth Package for TB DOTS
- Rational Use of Alternative Medicine
- Neutraceuticals
- Harmful Effects of Diet Pills
- MIMS Clinic Consult (CD-ROM Version)
- Health Screening in Adolescents
- Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder
- Depressed Approach in School Health in East Asian Countries

AWARDEES

Family Physician of the Year
ACELA CARAMAT-TUAZON, MD

Most Outstanding Chapter
ZAMBOANGA CITY

Leadership Award
GIL F. CAUILAN, MD (PRES., DAVAO CITY CHAPTER)

Most Active Chapter Secretary
CONCEPCION M. SALUMBIDES, MD (DAVAO CITY)

Most Active Chapter Treasurer
JOHN H. ANACAN, MD (ZAMBOANGA CITY)

Most Active Chapter in Community Service
ZAMBOANGA CITY

Most Active Chapter in CME
DAVAO CITY

The Philippine International Convention Center will once again be home to more than 3,000 family practitioners starting February 26 when the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians holds its 43rd anniversary and annual convention.

Bannering the theme - The Compassionate Family Physician Amidst Technological Advances, this year's Convention aims for a certain amount of introspection. Recent advances in medical technology have challenged the profession to go back to the elements such as understanding human behavior and emphasizing the family.

The event is slated to run from February 26 to 28. It topbills speakers who will tackle top medical issues and trends, with PCHRD Director Gemiliano D. Aligui heading the elite roster.

As if to underscore the importance of the event, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is set to keynote the convention during the opening ceremonies slated on February 26, 2004 at the PICC Reception Hall. President Arroyo will address a motley group of attendees from various chapters and training institutions nationwide.

Over all chair Dr. Soraya P. Abubakar said the Organizing Committee has put a lot of hard work to make the affair an exciting experience to learn new innovations, better diagnostic tools, promising therapeutic interventions, research outputs and interesting family cases.

Apart from the timely session topics from medical experts, the convention will also feature a trade exhibit where hospitality areas and booths feature gimmicks and attractions for convention participants. More than 3,000 attendees are expected to show up at the registration counters.

During the fellowship night, PAFP shall also pay tribute to its outstanding chapters and members.

Educational highlights include two plenary lectures, CPC finals, environmental project presentation and over 50 simultaneous sessions.

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Over-all Chair	Soraya P. Abubakar, MD
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Information & Action Center	Josephine Chikiamco-Dizon, MD Lynne Marcia-Bautista, MD

In 1960, a group of general practitioners came together to focus in improving their image, practice privileges and knowledge. It eventually led to the founding of the Philippine Association of General Practitioners, better known now as the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP). These focuses continue today but membership has clearly changed.

In the early '90s, the Academy was composed of less than a thousand members. It has evolved into an organization of more than 5,000 active members with diverse perspectives.

There has been concern over the years about maintaining the integrity of the membership, particularly with regard to training. Ultimately, it shut its doors for non-residency trained family physicians in year 2000.

After 43 years, the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians has gone from strength to strength and has consolidated its position as a very important medical specialty organization in the country.

The PAFP has been holding regional conferences which afford opportunities for its members to continuing education, not only on their own specialty but on other medical breakthroughs as well.

For the current president, Dr. Reynaldo A. Olazo, the residency training is something close to his heart and great efforts are being made to realize the aim of coming up with an innovative residency training.

The PAFP has its own scientific journal, *The Filipino Family Physician* published in four numbers annually and now enjoys a circulation of 4,500. Its provides forum for the research outputs of its members. The *PAFP Reporter*, on the other hand, comes out quarterly, allowing the Academy to disseminate information on its activities.

In the near future, PAFP intends to come up with a Handbook in Family Medicine, a reference book for medical students and clinicians.

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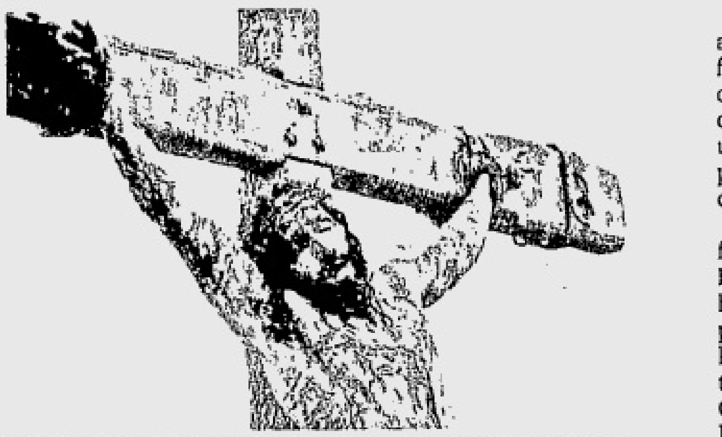
As debate rages, Mel Gibson's 'Passion' opens today in US

From page A1



REVIVING old wounds between the Jews and Christians, "The Passion of the Christ," financed, produced directed and co-written by Oscar-winning director Mel Gibson, is heralded as the most awaited film in modern movie history. Jesus is portrayed by Jim Caviezel. AP

Gibson, the Oscar-winning director of "Braveheart," whose latest film depicts the last 12 hours of Jesus' life personally financed the $25-million movie.

Did Jews kill Jesus?

Some American Jewish leaders have protested that "The Passion of the Christ" would revive long-held beliefs that Jews were responsible for Jesus' death. Vatican II (1962-1965), however, has made its position clear in a statement: "What happened in (Christ's) passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today."

Morgenstern, a Romanian Jewish actress whose parents are Holocaust survivors, defended Gibson and the film against the charges. "I don't think it's fair," she told the INQUIRER."

Pre-judging

I think it's a question of pre-judging. It's also a question of sloganeering by the critics. The film speaks against manipulation. It is not only a religious film but a film with strong social messages and philosophical meaning. One of these (messages) is that we shouldn't let ourselves be manipulated by slogans and by prejudging."

This reporter witnessed a first as the movie was screened before the jaded Hollywood press.

Most journalists usually stand up and leave the screening room even before the closing credits roll. At the screening of "The Passion of the Christ," virtually every reporter stayed until the last credits were being shown, as if in stunned silence. The movie is that powerful, and is not a boring Lent movie.

Relentlessly graphic in its depiction of the scourging and crucifixion of Christ, it is, however, the Roman soldiers who are portrayed as brutal.

Jim Caviezel, who is a devout Catholic, defended the film's violence. "When you see 'Schindler's List,' you see that the brutality is necessary to show the truth," he said. " In 'Saving Private Ryan,' the opening scene was essential to show that much violence, to get the message across that war is like a living hell."

Brutality

"Showing the brutality done to Jesus' body demonstrates that this was one individual who took more upon himself than anybody else. You have to show what really happened or why he endured that ," he said, adding that he was offered to play Jesus three times but turned them all down because "I wasn't interested in a watered-down version of my faith."

In addition to enduring the scourging (Caviezel was actually hit several times) and crucifixion scenes (he braved the bitter Italian winter chill hanging on the cross), the actor told reporters he was actually struck by lightning. Sharing the same joke he told Newsweek earlier, he told us that after lightning hit him, he looked heavenward and asked, "You didn't like that take?"

Morgenstern's only lament is that Gibson added English subtitles since the actors speak in Aramaic, the language of the Jewish people at the time, and Latin, for the Roman characters. She would have preferred no subtitles "because the film speaks clearly through its emotions."

Though Gibson has granted rare interviews about the film, he faced television broadcaster Diane Sawyer on ABC's "Primetime" recently and told her that to be anti-Semitic "goes against the tenets of my faith, to be racist in any form. To be anti-Semitic is a sin. It's been condemned by one papal council after another...to be anti-Semitic is to be un-Christian, and I'm not."

A story in New York Times Magazine last year featured Gibson's father, Hutton Gibson, 85, who questioned the extent of the Holocaust. Both Gibsons are said to be ultra-conservative Catholics who prefer to hear Mass in Latin and are critical of the Vatican II reforms.

While he refused to discuss his father's controversial views on the Holocaust, the actor made it clear he believed the Holocaust happened and that millions were killed. ("It's all—maybe not all fiction—but most of it is," Hutton Gibson told New York talk show host Steve Feuerstein last week). Refusing to discuss his father's controversial views on the Holocaust, the actor told Sawyer, "He's my father. Got to leave it alone, Diane."

Love and forgiveness

Commented Dean Devlin, a Filipino-American Hollywood producer who is among Gibson's Jewish friends who saw the film, in a Los Angeles Times interview: "I don't think the film is anti-Semitic. It is a beautiful film of love and forgiveness and isn't about pointing any fingers at anyone. If someone sees it as an indictment of the Jews, he would have missed the whole point."

"The film, like our faith, allows free will, free choice," said Caviezel. "People will choose what they choose if they want to see it or not. They don't have to. Do you have to be religious to see this film? Absolutely not."

Dallas evangelist Mike Evans, who saw the film at a screening attended by Gibson, said he told the filmmaker he could have ended the whole controversy over Jewish responsibility with a simple footnote appearing on the screen at the end of the movie.

"The Romans crucified 250,000 Jews but only one of them rose." Evans said Gibson liked the idea but never followed through. *With a report from Reuters*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Haitian rebels set sights on capital

CAP HAITIEN, Haiti—Rebels said they would be in the Haitian capital within days and Washington sent Marines to protect its embassy on Monday after the country's second largest city fell in a bloody armed revolt.

Rebel leaders said after seizing control of the northern city of Cap Haitien on Sunday they were ready to take the entire country and liberate it from President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's "slavery."

"We will be in Port-au-Prince in a few days," rebel leader Guy Philippe said on local radio.

About 50 US Marines flew in on two C-130 Hercules transport planes to Port-au-Prince airport on a mission to protect the US Embassy and other US facilities in Haiti.

The Marines, who appeared on edge, drove in a column of some 15 SUVs and three supply trucks to the embassy.

France, which ruled Haiti until 1804, joined several other foreign governments in telling its citizens to leave. The international airport was packed with people, including US missionaries, clamoring for flights out in stifling heat.

Aristide's government said it was sending reinforcements north and repeated a plea for international help for its hopelessly outgunned police. About 60 people have died in the revolt that erupted on Feb. 5 in the poorest country in the Americas.

Seizing their biggest prize so far, a ski-mask-clad rebel force of 200 on Sunday overran Cap Haitien, a city of about 500,000, putting anti-Aristide forces in control of much of the north.

At least 10 people were killed during the attack, including several rebels, government spokesperson Mario Dupuy said.

Looters struck in Cap Haitien after the rebel advance. A mob hit a World Food Program warehouse on the outskirts of the city, taking about 800 metric tons of food valued at nearly $740,000.

Other parts of the city appeared calm a day after the rebels struck. Cows ambled by the side of the runway at the airport and people on bicycles went about their business.

Joking and relaxed, a rebel leader said his comrades would soon take over the rest of the country.

"We will liberate Haiti from the slavery of Aristide," said Louis Jodel Chamblain. "So far, the only resistance we've encountered has been with machetes," Chamblain said at the city's airport.

Chamblain, a former leader of a militia that terrorized Haitians in the early 1990s, was surrounded by about 50 rebel fighters dressed in military fatigues; some were armed with automatic rifles. The rebels wore riot gear and dark glasses with gas masks tied to their belts. *Reuters*

US MARINES arrive on Tuesday in Port-au-Prince to help reinforce security at the US Embassy in the Haitian capital. The 50 Marines were flown from Norfolk Naval Base in the southern US state of Virginia to Port-au-Prince at the request of the US Ambassador to Haiti James Foley. AFP

Pakistan arrests 25 al-Qaida suspects

WANA, Pakistan—Pakistani troops detained at least 25 suspects and blew up two houses in a new offensive against al-Qaida and Taliban militants on Tuesday in a remote tribal area near the Afghan border, officials said.

A day earlier, US and Pakistani military officials said the whereabouts of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden remained a mystery, despite a British news report saying his location had been narrowed down to Pakistani mountains near the Afghan border.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the latest operation was launched near Wana, nearly 300 km northeast of where Bin Laden was reported to be hiding.

Asked whether the operation was targeting Bin Laden, he said: "It is against foreign terrorists."

A Reuters reporter saw troops destroy two houses with cannon fire in the village of Zarai Letta, about 15 km west of the town of Wana, while military helicopters flew overhead. Wana is 360 km southwest of Islamabad.

Seven suspects were seen being driven away in military vehicles, but it was unclear if they were foreigners or local tribesmen. Intelligence officials said 25 people, including women, had been detained.

"We are trying to establish their identity but initial investigations suggest there could be some Uzbeks, Chechens and Arabs among them," one said.

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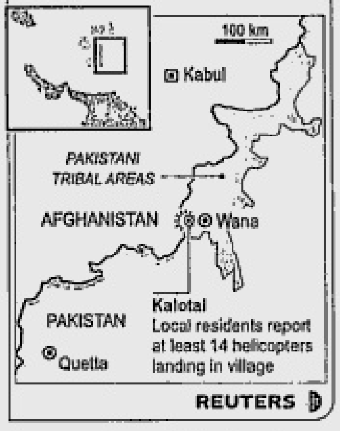

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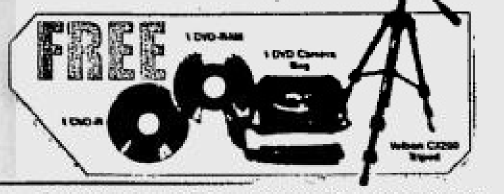

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Haitian rebels set sights on capital

US MARINES arrive on Tuesday in Port-au-Prince to help reinforce security at the US Embassy in the Haitian capital. The 50 Marines were flown from Norfolk Naval Base in the southern US state of Virginia to Port-au-Prince at the request of the US Ambassador to Haiti James Foley. AFP

CAP HAITIEN, Haiti—Rebels said they would be in the Haitian capital within days and Washington sent Marines to protect its embassy on Monday after the country's second largest city fell in a bloody armed revolt.

Rebel leaders said after seizing control of the northern city of Cap Haitien on Sunday they were ready to take the entire country and liberate it from President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's "slavery."

"We will be in Port-au-Prince in a few days," rebel leader Guy Philippe said on local radio.

About 50 US Marines flew in on two C-130 Hercules transport planes to Port-au-Prince airport on a mission to protect the US Embassy and other US facilities in Haiti.

The Marines, who appeared on edge, drove in a column of some 15 SUVs and three supply trucks to the embassy.

France, which ruled Haiti until 1804, joined several other foreign governments in telling its citizens to leave. The international airport was packed with people, including US missionaries, clamoring for flights out in stifling heat.

Aristide's government said it was sending reinforcements north and repeated a plea for international help for its hopelessly outgunned police. About 60 people have died in the revolt that erupted on Feb. 5 in the poorest country in the Americas.

Seizing their biggest prize so far, a ski-mask-clad rebel force of 200 on Sunday overran Cap Haitien, a city of about 500,000, putting anti-Aristide forces in control of much of the north.

At least 10 people were killed during the attack, including several rebels, government spokesperson Mario Dupuy said.

Looters struck in Cap Haitien after the rebel advance. A mob hit a World Food Program warehouse on the outskirts of the city, taking about 800 metric tons of food valued at nearly $740,000.

Other parts of the city appeared calm a day after the rebels struck. Cows ambled by the side of the runway at the airport and people on bicycles went about their business.

Joking and relaxed, a rebel leader said his comrades would soon take over the rest of the country.

"We will liberate Haiti from the slavery of Aristide," said Louis Jodel Chamblain. "So far, the only resistance we've encountered has been with machetes," Chamblain said at the city's airport.

Chamblain, a former leader of a militia that terrorized Haitians in the early 1990s, was surrounded by about 50 rebel fighters dressed in military fatigues; some were armed with automatic rifles. The rebels wore riot gear and dark glasses with gas masks tied to their belts. *Reuters*

Pakistan arrests 25 al-Qaida suspects

WANA, Pakistan—Pakistani troops detained at least 25 suspects and blew up two houses in a new offensive against al-Qaida and Taliban militants on Tuesday in a remote tribal area near the Afghan border, officials said.

A day earlier, US and Pakistani military officials said the whereabouts of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden remained a mystery, despite a British news report saying his location had been narrowed down to Pakistani mountains near the Afghan border.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the latest operation was launched near Wana, nearly 300 km northeast of where Bin Laden was reported to be hiding.

Asked whether the operation was targeting Bin Laden, he said: "It is against foreign terrorists."

A Reuters reporter saw troops destroy two houses with cannon fire in the village of Zarai Letta, about 15 km west of the town of Wana, while military helicopters flew overhead. Wana is 360 km southwest of Islamabad.

Seven suspects were seen being driven away in military vehicles, but it was unclear if they were foreigners or local tribesmen. Intelligence officials said 25 people, including women, had been detained.

"We are trying to establish their identity but initial investigations suggest there could be some Uzbeks, Chechens and Arabs among them," one said.

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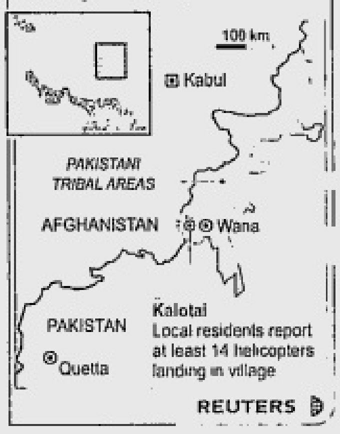

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Taking stock

EDITORIAL

TO HAVE been born on the day Ferdinand Marcos fled is to be 18 years old today. Old enough to vote, old enough to have received military training. To be 18 is to be young enough to know the Edsa Revolution only as a story. A magical story of a time when Filipinos were united: united by a shared moral outrage; united by a valor that defied guns, goons and gold; united by a shared dream of having a country and a government in which we could all take pride.

Today the inheritors of Edsa see the tactics of people power being used like any old tactic, often for causes directly related to the people and ideas that outraged a nation into engaging in people power in the first place. The forces scattered in all directions after Edsa, who fled, hid and feared for their lives, have slowly and inexorably tried to reduce Edsa to merely a game of numbers, thinking that all it takes to accomplish political change is to summon enough people to the streets, to attack enough people and institutions in the press with black propaganda, and to get enough adventurous soldiers on your side. While these forces have certainly been successful in creating mischief, they have never been successful in creating the unity that true people power requires.

The tactics of people power, without the moral compass that gives direction to genuine people power, is the politics of the angry mob, the insincere rabble-rousing politician and the egomaniacal military putschist. Those who envy people power do not see beyond the colored shirts, the hand gestures and the mass actions because they cannot comprehend a world in which people are not paid to act, or frightened into participating in a mass action.

Since 1986, people power has only manifested itself when the correct conditions existed to spark a moral outrage that crosses socioeconomic lines. People power was present twice in rejecting Charter change when it was obviously meant to benefit the incumbent. It manifested itself when there was a proposal to give a disgraced dictator a hero's burial. It flourished when a democratically elected president thought his office was meant to be enjoyed like an Oriental despot's, and not exercised with seriousness and held in trust as befits a responsible leader.

To understand the meaning of Edsa, for a generation too young to remember it, requires taking stock of the things we now take for granted. Freedom of speech and of assembly; the freedom to complain, and even be disappointed. Freedom to vent that disappointment not just on the streets, but in the polling booth. Edsa did not liberate the country from poverty, or the control of crooked politicians; it did not free us from the baleful influence of soldiers on our national life. What it freed us from was the paralysis that fear and brainwashing instills. It gave a country a chance to show it was not about "the true, the good, and the beautiful" as expressed in antiques bought with the people's money, but about spending that money in an accountable manner.

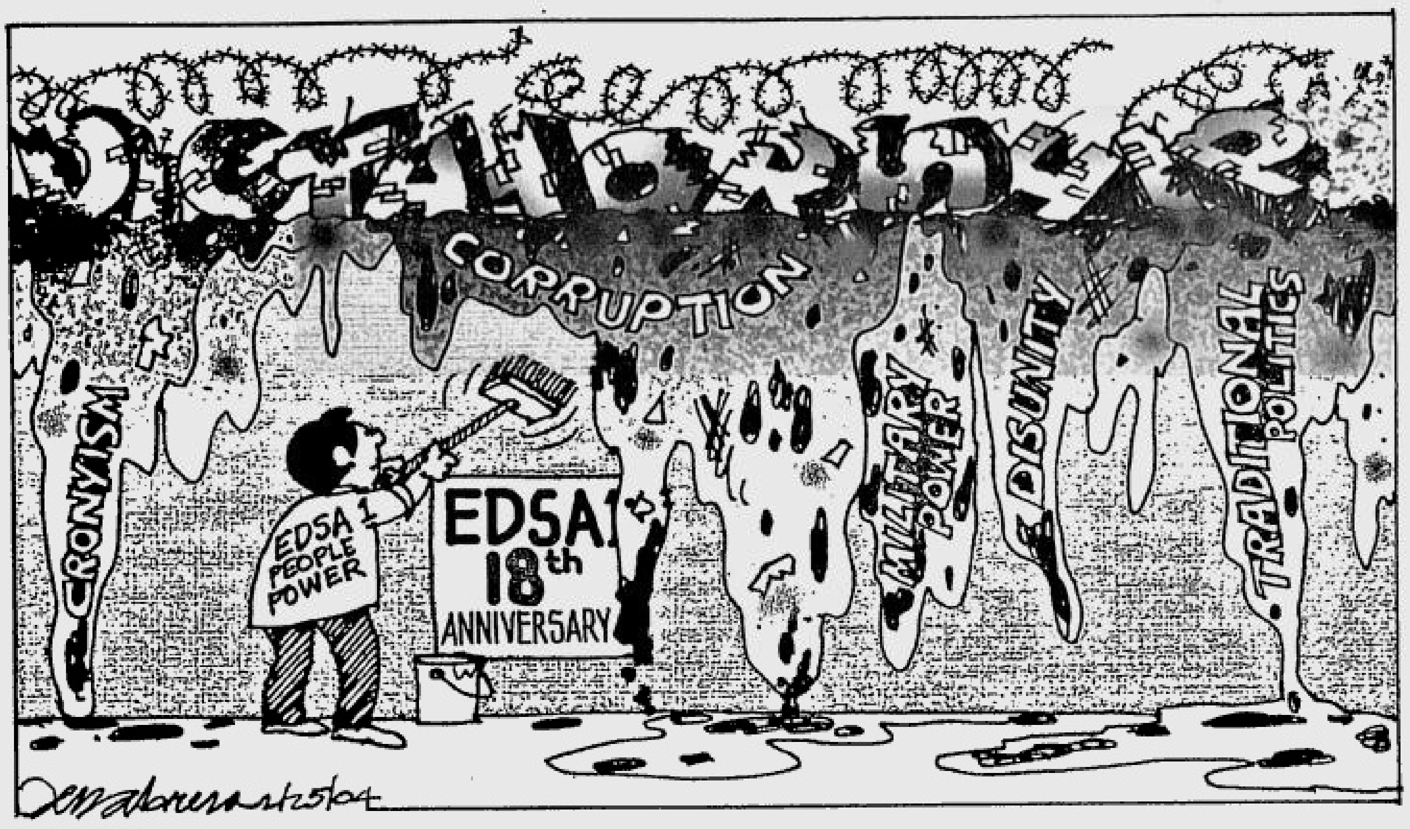
Edsa brought together a nation, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, in a common cause. That cause was for a national leadership that derived its mandate from the public, and not from the barrel of a gun or the bribery of the population. That cause was about allowing people the freedom, in a sense, to be free.

But having freedom is different from behaving like free men and women. Learning the difference is, perhaps, the task now left to the inheritors of Edsa.

This year, the Edsa babies become men and women. They are now free citizens who get to vote. Some of the Edsa babies were at Edsa II, and already feel the bitterness and regret that their parents felt in the aftermath of Edsa I. Their elders must remind them that the young are in a far better position today to do something about their feelings of disappointment than their parents were in the days of martial law. Edsa I was not a failure, as shown by Edsa II. But it wasn't a total success, either.

For perhaps in telling stories to the young, of those glorious February days, we have forgotten to tell them about how long, and difficult, the road to freedom was. And how long and difficult the road ahead remains.

Freedom is not an eternal flame. It must be kept lit, and tended, even during warm and sunny days.



FPJ and Kapihan sa Manila

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

AS former Rep. Mike Romero, official KNP spokesman, was winding up at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday, we had an unexpected visitor: Fernando Poe Jr. no less. There he was, standing hesitantly at the entrance, in blue jeans and a white shirt, sleeves rolled up almost to the elbows, his hair carefully brushed back.

Romero escorted him to the head table, gave his seat to FPJ, and took a seat in the audience. The interview was short, as it was getting late.

Since he is always being criticized for having no economic plan, I asked him what he plans to do with the economy.

"*Simple lang*," he replied. "I will ban first class and business class seats. All plane tickets will be economy."

What about the rising exchange rate of the dollar against the peso?

"Nothing to worry about. That will be solved eventually by gravity. What goes up must come down."

The stock market is falling. What will he do about it?

"Within 100 days of my presidency," FPJ replied, "I will transfer the stock exchange from the first floor to the seventh floor, so *tataas na*."

They say you have no platform at all.

"*Anong wala?* I'm already having a platform constructed at Plaza Miranda for the *miting de avance*. It is GMA who needs a platform—platform shoes."

They say you are *anak sa labas*.

"How can I be *anak sa labas*? I was born inside a hospital delivery room."

What will you do if the Supreme Court declares that you are not a natural-born Filipino but an American?

"Then I will run for president of America."

There were more exchanges like that. I don't want to tell all of the jokes because there may be none left for the replay at the Music Museum. If you want to laugh more at FPJ—and GMA, Ping Lacson, Raul Roco—catch Willie Nepomuceno's show next month. For yes, that was Willie Nep, the celebrated impersonator.

Afterwards, I invited Willie and some friends to lunch at the Seafood Wharf and, later, hunting for a clubhouse for Plaridel, the new association of veteran journalists. Willie forgot to remove his disguise. So as we walked here and there, people were doing double-takes, gawking and gaping at Willie whom they took for FPJ.

At the restaurant, I amused myself by watching the diners. Some of them couldn't eat as they kept looking at Willie and whispering to one another.

One interesting observation is that most adult Filipinos are reserved. None of the diners stood up to ask although they kept looking and whispering. The waiters, security guards and children weren't embarrassed to ask and laughed when they learned the truth.

* * *

While we are on the subject of breakfast forums and copycats, I might as well write about the Kapihan sa Manila which antedates the Edsa People Power I by one year and celebrates its anniversary—usually with a rollicking spoof show starring Willie Nep and his troupe—every February, just like Edsa I. And since a couple of people wrote about a disagreeable incident there last Feb. 16 which was also shown on TV, I might as well set the record straight.

The Kapihan sa Manila is the original breakfast forum. It is "the mother of all kapihans" (all the others are imitations), prompting its fans to affix the description "imitated but never equaled" to it. There are now kapihans all over the Philippines, and one each in New York and San Francisco.

Its original purpose was to give the opposition during martial law an outlet for their opinions. It is to the credit of the professionalism of the editors and reporters of the so-called "crony press" that it was they who founded the Kapihan sa Manila to give the opposition a voice. With the kapihan, which was intended for the newswriters to have access to the newsmakers, what the opposition said became legitimate news and were published in the "crony press."

On the unfortunate Feb. 16, 2004 kapihan, our guests were Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and reelectionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., APJ for short. Two presidential wannabes who were disqualified by the Comelec as "nuisance candidates" were there very early, lying in ambush for Abalos. They and their group were already occupying a table reserved for working journalists when I arrived.

I was warned that they may be up to no good. Indeed, as soon as the forum started, one of the "nuisance candidates" (I won't mention their names because it would only give them the publicity they crave) stood before the microphone, wanting to be called. As the moderator and interviewer, I paid him no mind.

Later, the other "nuisance candidate" sent me a note asking that I allow the other candidate to ask questions. The kapihan is only for working journalists. The candidates showed up there for the first time only that morning, without being invited, and they wanted to be given priority over the regulars. So I paid them no mind.

Finally, one of them grabbed the mike and started talking.

"Wait a minute, you're not yet recognized," I said.

But he continued haranguing us in a loud voice and that started the whole thing. A former actor, who had on two previous occasions asked me to attack Henry Sy of Shoemart in my column because the latter refused to allow him to dig for the Yamashita Treasure that he said was buried under the Santa Ana race tracks that Sy had bought (I of course refused to do any such fool thing), joined the fray. So naturally there was shouting back and forth. Pimentel tapped my hand and told me to "keep cool."

The forum had already been disrupted anyway, so I adjourned it and walked out.

Personal revenge

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

JACKSON Browne has a song I've always liked. It was written by the Nicaraguan poet Jose Borje and the musician Louis Enrique Mejia Godoy and translated into English by Jose Calderon. Noel Cabangon used to sing it some years ago at 70s Bistro. It's called "My Personal Revenge." It goes:

"My personal revenge will be the right/ Of our children in the schools and in the gardens/ My personal revenge will be to give you/ This song which has flourished without panic/ My personal revenge will be to show you/ The kindness in the eyes of my people/ Who have always fought relentlessly in battle/ And been generous and firm in victory.

"My personal revenge will be to tell you good morning/ On a street without beggars or homeless/ When instead of jailing you I suggest/ You shake away the sadness there that blinds you/ And when you who have applied your hands in torture/ Are unable to look up at what surrounds you/ My personal revenge will be to give you/ These hands that once you so mistreated/ But have failed to take away their tenderness.

"It was the people who hated you the most/ When rage became the language of their song/ And underneath the skin of this town today/ Its heart has been scarred forevermore."

It's a brilliant insight, a revolutionary taking "personal revenge" against a tyrant in this way. His personal revenge is not to torture him or rob him blind or oppress him the way he did him. His personal revenge is to do the exact opposite of what he did. His personal revenge is to make things better for the people, and so show the true depths of his tyranny. His personal revenge is to put kids in school, rid the streets of beggars, show kindness and mercy, bring back song and laughter to the mouths of the oppressed.

It's the most sublime revenge there is. It's also the most effective one there is. If indeed there is any other. The only way to destroy a tyranny is through decency, the only way to destroy wickedness is through goodness, the only way to destroy selfishness and greed is through generosity and altruism. The other kinds of revenge only turn you into the ogre you just killed.

I remembered that song because of Edsa, which we celebrate today. It's almost hard to believe it's now 18 years from the event. And as normally happens during the Edsa anniversary, voices are raised in grief and lamentation. How could so magnificent an event produce so miserable an outcome? That is not to speak of the second Edsa, which was from a certain perspective even more magnificent—it was the more spontaneous and patent display of people power against a thereto popular president—and produced an even more miserable outcome: Gloria.

The grief and lamentation are understandable. The song above supplies the answer to the question. How could we have risen to heights of heroism only to fall down to depths of pettiness? Because the revenge the people who took the place of the tyrants wrought on the tyrants became too personal.

Marcos robbed from Cory and her relatives and friends, they took revenge by robbing back from Marcos, their relatives and their friends. What removed the "good" from the Presidential Commission on Good Government from the start was that it remembered only one of its two mandates, which was to recover the wealth Marcos stole from the people. It forgot that the other mandate was to return that wealth to the people. It recovered the wealth instead for Cory's family and friends, seizing the government corporations Marcos populated with his cronies for themselves.

Cory never forgave the people who were responsible for her husband's death, but she was quick to forgive the military officers who helped Marcos make life hell for 65 million Filipinos for 14 years simply because they were at Edsa. Raul Alfonsin's personal revenge against the members of the military junta who were responsible for the disappearance of thousands of Argentinians was to form the Truth Commission to prosecute them and make sure the human rights abuses they committed would never happen again. Cory's personal revenge against the officers who tortured and killed hundreds of Filipinos was to reward them where they helped at Edsa and hound them where they took part in the murder of her husband. No officer was ever reprimanded or demoted or jailed for the murder of citizens, many of them reveling in the flush of life.

As to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's personal revenge against Erap, well, the only reason she did not have one is that Erap never oppressed her. She never suffered at all, materializing from out of nowhere only when it was time to collect the crown. In one sense it is not true that she betrayed Edsa II. That sense is that she never was part of Edsa II. How can you betray something you never believed in?

That kind of personal revenge doesn't destroy tyranny, it conserves it. It props it up, it makes it thrive, it allows it to come back. A couple of years after Edsa, Danding Cojuangco was back, and not long after Imelda and Kokoy. By then there was no one to protest it. The Edsa stalwarts would rail bitterly at the forgetfulness of the Filipino, allowing an iniquity like that to let pass. But it wasn't just the grand forgetfulness of the Filipinos that had done the trick. What we had was a tyranny replacing a previous one.

What had made it possible for the Marcoses to return was a personal revenge that had not made things better for the people to show the true blackness of what had gone before. What had made it possible for people to forget was a personal revenge that had not brought the kids to school, rid the streets of beggars and brought back song and laughter to the mouths of the oppressed.

All we got was too personal a personal revenge.

People power and mob rule

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

EIGHTEEN years after the first people power uprising on Feb. 25, 1986, the lesson of Edsa I has been completely misread. In Edsa I, the people exercised their sovereign power directly to topple a dictatorial regime that had robbed them of their democracy in September 1972. Edsa I was therefore the benchmark for the restoration of democracy. It was never in the thought of the multitudes that marched on Edsa, in defiance of tanks, to inaugurate an era of mob rule.

Edsa I is about the return to democratic process and institutions—especially free elections. This was the point of the restoration of democracy by the government of President Corazon Aquino, which swiftly institutionalized the restoration through the 1987 Freedom Constitution. The grave threats to the Aquino government did not come from unruly mobs, inspired by the Edsa I example. They came from anti-democratic military coups, seven in all in four years.

It was neither contemplated nor intended that Edsa, as an expression of raw and direct democracy, would harden into a model of changing abusive governments, least of all, of assaulting democratic institutions, such as the Supreme Court. The consolidation of the restored democratic institution was dislocated by the wave of unrest churned by grievances over regime venalities, particularly corruption and incompetence in running government.

People Power II (which toppled the Estrada government) and "People Power III" (which unleashed the unruly mob on the newly installed Macapagal administration) are symptomatic of the failure of the people to understand that there can be no stable democracy when each time they are disgruntled with their government, they go on a rampage in the streets demanding its ouster. This chain of disruptive street actions illustrates the notion that too often, recourse to people power, as a raw form of direct democracy, leads to an unstable and ungovernable democracy. These disturbances tell us that people power, when abused and overused, can never be a satisfactory means of changing governments. They cannot be a substitute to a process which requires forbearance and tolerance to work.

Tampering with the process can set off a chain of self-dueling events. The tampering with the impeachment process during the Senate trial of President Estrada (through the vote to suppress vital evidence contained in an envelope) set in motion Edsa II, which cut short the term of Estrada. The lesson is that one interference in a constitutional process (the impeachment) can lead to another institutional infringement, the ouster of Estrada. People power can easily turn into habitual mob rule as demonstrated by the Labor Day mob attack on Malacañang.

No matter who mobilizes the mob—whether churchmen, do-gooding middle-class led civil society activists or rabble-rousing demagogues inciting the poor against the rich—the effect is the same. The rule of law or process is overthrown by the rule of the rabble, using the streets as the venue for forcing political change rather than channeling grievances into processes and institutions.

Since the legitimation of the Macapagal regime by the Supreme Court in a series of decisions, the Court itself has become a lightning rod for mob action, instigated by parties adversely affected by its rulings. The threat of mob rule can never overturn judicial decisions and correct the legal basis of such decisions. Mob rule is driven by anger.

As the country remembers Edsa I today, it faces the threat of mob rule as the Supreme Court deliberates on the petition to disqualify an opposition presidential candidate on the ground of alleged non-compliance with the constitutional criterion that only natural-born Filipinos can run for president. Partisan hotheads have warned of civil war if Fernando Poe Jr. is disqualified.

Whatever may be its verdict, we are sure that the Court will decide the case after a careful consideration of the law and evidence. It is certain that the Court will bow less to threat than to process. The threat is an interference in the judicial process—the rule of law—and a contumacious attack on judicial independence.

Civil war cannot be taken lightly. It is a horrible slaughter the likes of which we have never seen in this country but which were experienced by the Americans during their civil war, the French during their revolution, the Chinese during their civil war, and the Russians during the Stalinist mass purges after the triumph of the Bolshevik revolution.

Civil war can make our Edsa series a Sunday picnic in the park, which they indeed were. Civil wars explode from fundamental issues more incendiary than judicial decisions over constitutional qualifications for the presidency.

The issue being decided by the Court is, however, not trivial. The issue involves citizenship rights. Those who take lightly the citizenship criterion—without first ascertaining their citizenship when aspiring for the presidency—may open themselves to the charge that they are making constitutional shortcuts to the presidency. This is why, whatever the political motives of those who filed the petition for disqualification, they have brought this important issue to a head. This shortcut is more serious than educational short-cuts because it makes a mockery of the Constitution.

Raising the threat of people power or civil war to keep the Court from rendering a carefully studied decision denigrates the function of direct popular sovereignty as an instrument to effect a change of government. It distorts people power as an agent of change. It entrenches people power as the cutting edge of mob rule. Eighteen years after Edsa I, we should already have channeled people power into the dikes of institutions and processes.

America's 'show-biz' president

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"DEADLINES Past" is the title of a book by Walter R. Mears, who for over 40 years as a correspondent, analyst, columnist and executive of the Associated Press, covered presidential campaigns from Kennedy, Nixon and Ford, to Carter, Reagan, George Bush, Clinton and "Dubya."

Sub-titled "Forty Years of Presidential Campaigning: A Reporter's Story," the book is a riveting account of the evolution of American politics through much of the last century. Reporting from the sidelines, from the campaign bus and plane, churning out stories about events even as they happened, Mears had a front-row seat to presidential campaigns, observing the candidates first-hand, fending off the spin doctors and making sense out of the mountain of press releases, policy papers and feeds.

Because we're in the middle of a national campaign, I found Mears' book fascinating, yielding insights that could very well apply to the Philippines, whose political culture, after all, is patterned closely after that of the United States.

Even as we hit ourselves over the head with the possibility of another actor-president, Americans, as Mears reminds us, were not themselves above falling for style over substance, illusion over reality. While he found Ronald Reagan personally affable and a great if distant source, Mears, ever the reporter, keeps track of his lapses in policy, the all-too-easy way he left the running of the White House to his deputies, the untroubled manner with which he shifted gears and contradicted himself. It wasn't so much that Reagan was careless and deceitful, Mears implies, but that the American people let him pull the wool over the eyes—for eight years.

The people had elected a "Great Communicator" and a beloved icon, but not the Great President his supporters make Reagan out to be. Here's a veteran reporter's assessment of this American show-biz president—and what a "Panday President" could also be.

* * *

"WATCHING it all, I thought the Reagan operation had the flavor of a sound and light show, mixed with some sleight of hand magic. Just watch the man in the spotlight and enjoy the display. Never mind the mundane details—the soaring budget deficits, the tax increases that nibbled at Reagan's big tax cut, or, worse, the casualty rate of enforcing administration foreign policy, the terrorist massacre of Marines in Beirut. The economy was up for most Americans, despite nagging unemployment. The great communicator was just that. As he said, America was back—from the fading mess of Watergate, the torment of Vietnam and the muddled term of Democratic rule that followed Nixon's resignation and Ford's brief succession. Americans wanted to believe in themselves again, and for the vast majority, that included believing in Reagan...

"There was no misreading the outlook against the Democrats. Conventional wisdom before the 1984 campaign was that Reagan would win unless something disastrous happened. Something disastrous did occur, more than once. But it didn't matter. Crises that would have been the undoing of a less venerated politician flowed off Reagan as though he'd been a bystander to casualties abroad, deepening debt at home and ethics shadows over appointees. Reagan's foes said he was a disengaged president who let his lieutenants run things in his name. One Democratic crack was that they knew he'd run for a second term because he had left a wake-up call for 1984. But the best lines the opposition could manage were no match for Reagan's winning, self-deprecating showmanship. 'What's all this talk about a breakdown in White House communications?' he asked. 'How come nobody told me?' Well, Reagan said, he'd fix that. 'From now on, about anything that happens, no matter what time it is, wake me, even if it's in the middle of a Cabinet meeting...'

* * *

"WITH A CAMPAIGN month to go, the age issue Reagan had been deflecting suddenly got serious for him. While he'd always made a joke of it, his strategists had been wary of the question all year. I never thought his age was the real problem; it was his disengagement, the sense that he was out of touch, the face and voice of the administration but not its hands-on executive. In 1981, US warplanes shot down Libyan jets that had challenged them off the coast of Libya. That underscored toughness in administration policy, but left questions about Reagan's command of it when the White House acknowledged the president had been sleeping at the time and was not told of the episode for six hours.

"Mondale kept trying to stir the disengagement question. 'I'm not sure which is worse,' he said, 'the arrogance of Mr. Reagan's isolation or his belief that the American people would let him get away with it.' Whatever the merits of the accusation, the belief was the fact. Except for Democratic partisans, people weren't concerned about Reagan's way of governing, and they liked his public, great communicator style. The Democrats said he wasn't good without a script, that he was a performer with prompters, using lines he knew by rote, with index card reminders always handy in case he forgot a point. A Mondale manager told me that if they could just shuffle those index cards, they'd have a chance to beat Reagan...

"When Reagan left office in 1989, he had the highest job approval ratings an outgoing president ever held, 68 percent. He was the first president in 60 years to turn the job over to an elected successor of his own party. His genius was not in the details but in avoiding them.

"In an uncertain world, Reagan stood for certainty, I wrote as he left office. He was unwavering, absolute in his convictions, never more so than when he was changing them. His style not only succeeded, it triumphed."

Folk remedies

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE of the scenes etched permanently in my memory was the morning after the Pinatubo eruption. Coming in from abroad, I noticed that the airport was unusually dark for a Manila afternoon. I didn't give it much thought. I learned the next day that we were the last flight allowed to land that day. Heavy ash fall caused the rerouting of other aircraft scheduled to land in Manila that afternoon.

Next morning I went to Mass in the Benedictine Abbey in Mendiola and noticed that the city was covered with fine white ash. The cloister garden was coated in such a way that it looked like a scene out of "Winter Wonderland," except that it was not cold. The Abbey sacristan, Dom. Gabriel Asejo, wondered aloud whether this ash from heaven could be used on people's foreheads on Ash Wednesday.

Only then did I learn that the ashes imposed on devout foreheads on Ash Wednesday are the burnt palms used during Palm Sunday or Domingo de Ramos the year before.

All around the country one can see these dried *palaspas* folded and braided in the nicest ways adorning windows and doors of houses. More than mere decoration or the advertisement that a Catholic lives in the home, it is believed that these blessed palms would drive off evil spirits, *aswangs*, robbers, kidnappers and, of course, thunder and lightning.

Today we begin the 40 days of Lent. Being a day of fasting and abstinence, most practicing Catholics will have only one meal and it will not be of bread and water but probably fish. Through the years, abstaining from meat on the Fridays of Lent has been taken to mean feasting on seafood. This can also explain why the rich and hearty mongo soup is usually served on Fridays.

Lent for me is more than Catholic observance. It reminds me of so many folk practices and beliefs that turn up at this time of year, leading to a climax during Holy Week.

A few days ago, I was reading an interview of an Argentinian soap opera star who is doing a show in the Philippines. During his vacation back in Argentina, he narrated his own experiences with ghosts and elementals and his mother gave him a Medalla de San Benito for protection against "*mumu*." To think that Argentina is halfway round the world, and yet the response is almost the same.

A whole section in the two-volume "Encyclopedia of Folk Beliefs and Customs" compiled by the Jesuit Francisco Demetrio (Xavier University, 1991) covers folk medicine. I consulted the book to see how left-over ash from Ash Wednesday was used in other ways and found so many folk remedies for all kinds of diseases.

Naturally sacramentals—holy water, crucifix, rosary, medals, novenas, *estampitas*, images of saints, etc.—figure in a lot of folk remedies. Some folk beliefs about their effects are quite, like the one traced to Iligan City which holds that it is bad for a sick person to be visited by a priest, and worse if the sick is administered Extreme Unction because then he would die. We all die anyway, so I am wondering whether it is better to die with the sacrament than without it.

Some people don't agree. The more fantastic cures are as follows:

Unripe papaya is used as a cure for appendicitis. But this isn't half as bad as taking the *batculon* of a chicken for same appendicitis. This is supposed to be the part of the intestine (?) where the waste material of the chicken is collected. The innermost yellowish layer is separated and broiled as a cure that seems worse than the disease.

Asthma is a common disease for which many remedies have been prescribed, ranging from dog meat, monkey meat, broiled centipede and roasted house lizard.

One cure for baldness is cheap but disgusting. You catch a fly (or seven flies), crush them and rub the paste on the bald part to make hair grow.

The cure for bedwetting has to be quoted lest readers think I am making it up: "A child who often urinates in bed can be cured by pouring a pail of water on him. No one must laugh when this is done." (The first part is easy; the second almost impossible.)

There are many remedies for snake bite, the most unusual being the first excrement of a child applied to the wound externally and also taken internally! This is preserved in bottles and called "triaca" or "theriacum." The squeamish has the option of making a cut near the wound and applying ginger and garlic directly on it.

Infants or babies who keep people awake with their crying are cured by undergoing fumigation with various elements, ranging from blessed candles to fish and seaweed. So far the worst cure for a crybaby is whipping with coconut midrib or *tingting*.

There are many remedies for sore eyes: excrement from red-feathered chicken, ground bedbugs mixed with oil, urine, breast milk and a child's urine.

Hemorrhage is cured with roasted and powdered earthworm mixed with coffee.

One can have a smooth face without going to a dermatologist by just applying the first menstrual blood on the face. Pimples are also cured with the first menstrual blood, or nicotine from cigarettes, powdered cockroach intestine, rice wash, tea or wiping the face with the underwear of a girl who is menstruating for the first time.

Most of these folk cures have disappeared in the wake of modern medicine, but knowing them helps us appreciate living in the 21st century and helps us understand or to be puzzled by the past.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

The mysterious Dagohoy tales

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WE often associate folklore with remote villages and ancient times, forgetting that there are contemporary forms of folklore as well, thriving quite well in the most urban of environments.

Today, the Internet is the most powerful medium for modern folklore, which still pretty much fulfills the same functions as ancient tales. The epic poems with folk heroes performing the most fantastic feats constitute only one genre. Another category (which is actually more popular) are the stories of supernatural creatures preying on mortals. Today, these stories are more down to earth, the most popular villains being computer viruses, snakes lurking around in mall dressing rooms, predatory taxi drivers and dates carrying around horse sedatives to slip into their dates' drink. All of these are myths, of course, but are there reflecting modern anxieties and fears.

Modern urban folklore also tends to be much more political now, consisting of the latest rumors about officials and now, electoral candidates. Sometimes the folklore takes the form of jokes, usually sent around by texts, but you also occasionally have longer ones that circulate through e-mail.

Urban folklore mutates rapidly, mainly because so many copies go around so quickly. People embellish the tales or jokes, adding or deleting, often updating according to current events.

An excellent example of this mutation comes with the intriguing "Story of Dagohoy," two versions of which have been going around. Let me give you the shorter one first:

It was the first day of school in Washington, D.C. and a new student named Dagohoy, the son of a Filipino immigrant, entered the fourth grade.

The teacher began, "Let's review some American history, class. Who said 'Give me liberty or give me death?'" She saw a sea of blank faces, except for Dagohoy's who had his hand up.

"Patrick Henry, 1775," he said.

"Very good," said the teacher.

"Who said 'Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth'"?

Again, no response except from Dagohoy: "Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg, 1863," he said.

The teacher snaps at the class, "Class, you should be ashamed. Dagohoy who is new to our country knows more about our history than you do."

She hears a loud whisper from the back: "Screw the Filipinos."

"Who said that?" she demanded.

Dagohoy put his hand up. "General John Pershing, Manila, 1896," he said

At that point, Jack, another student says, "I'm going to puke."

The teacher glares and asks, "All right! Now, who said that?"

Again Dagohoy answers, "George Bush Sr. to the Japanese prime minister during the state dinner, Tokyo, 1991."

Now furious, another student yells, "Oh yeah? S--- this!!"

Dagohoy jumps out of his chair waving his hand and shouts to the teacher at the top of his voice, "Bill Clinton to Monica Lewinsky, the Oval Office, 1997!!"

Someone shouts, "You little s--t, if you say anything else, I'll kill you."

Dagohoy yells, "Congressman Gary Condit to Chandra Levy, Washington, D.C., 2001!"

The teacher faints.

"I'm outta here!" mutters one student as he sidles to the door.

"President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Baguio City, Dec. 30, 2002!!" Dagohoy responds.

As the class gathers around her on the floor, someone says, "Oh s--t, now we're really in big trouble!"

"Saddam Hussein, on the Iraq invasion, Baghdad, May 2003!" Dagohoy bellows.

"Now, I really have to run," Jack mutters, heading for the exit.

"Gloria Macapagal Arroyo again, Pampanga, Oct. 4, 2003!!!" Dagohoy shouts triumphantly, jumping with glee.

* * *

Folklore is almost always anonymous, but I think readers will agree with me that this was probably first written up by a Filipino living in the States. Note how the story lampoons both Filipino and American politicians, with Saddam Hussein thrown in for good measure. I also suspect the one who wrote this up is more familiar with US history and current events than with those back home in the Philippines. There's a little lapse in the author's reference to General Pershing's alleged statement, supposedly made in Manila in 1896. Pershing was an American general assigned to the Philippines in the 20th century, not 1896, and he was assigned to Muslim Mindanao, not Manila.

But goodness, all this is urban folklore and I'm not about to quibble about the historical details. I did want to move on to a longer version of this Dagohoy story that's been going around. The short version is sort of happy, with Dagohoy emerging triumphant. The longer version adds a few more paragraphs to come up with a more ambiguous ending:

A burly African-American boy grabs Dagohoy and strangles him, ready to strike a frightened Dagohoy with his fist.

Then an Asian boy stands up and shouts, "Hey easy on him. I'M A FILIPINO!"

Dagohoy then blurts out before he gets socked out, "Fernando Poe Jr., Manila, January 2004!!!"

Folklore provides comic relief from social tensions. In this crazy tale about Dagohoy, we find a mixture of tensions coming from Philippine politics as well as from the States. Having lived in the States, I can relate, as well, to the way Dagohoy represents the Filipino underdog, more American than Americans when it comes to memorizing dates and events from US history. Note, too, the racial tensions with the reference to a "burly African-American boy." I suspect our Filipino folklore writer has in fact become quite American, using the politically correct term even if the reference is itself bordering on racism.

In the end, we can just sit back and laugh as we see this updated reference to FPJ. Folklore appeals because we can relate to the characters. We're laughing, as usual, at ourselves, but there's more!

As Dagohoy is bullied and wrestled to the ground and then he runs off, still defiant and getting in the last word—*huling hirit*—we cheer Dagohoy on, because Dagohoy is us.

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People power and mob rule

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

EIGHTEEN years after the first people power uprising on Feb. 25, 1986, the lesson of Edsa I has been completely misread. In Edsa I, the people exercised their sovereign power directly to topple a dictatorial regime that had robbed them of their democracy in September 1972. Edsa I was therefore the benchmark for the restoration of democracy. It was never in the thought of the multitudes that marched on Edsa, in defiance of tanks, to inaugurate an era of mob rule.

Edsa I is about the return to democratic process and institutions—especially free elections. This was the point of the restoration of democracy by the government of President Corazon Aquino, which swiftly institutionalized the restoration through the 1987 Freedom Constitution. The grave threats to the Aquino government did not come from unruly mobs, inspired by the Edsa I example. They came from anti-democratic military coups, seven in all in four years.

It was neither contemplated nor intended that Edsa, as an expression of raw and direct democracy, would harden into a model of changing abusive governments, least of all, of assaulting democratic institutions, such as the Supreme Court. The consolidation of the restored democratic institution was dislocated by the wave of unrest churned by grievances over regime venalities, particularly corruption and incompetence in running government.

People Power II (which toppled the Estrada government) and "People Power III" (which unleashed the unruly mob on the newly installed Macapagal administration) are symptomatic of the failure of the people to understand that there can be no stable democracy when each time they are disgruntled with their government, they go on a rampage in the streets demanding its ouster. This chain of disruptive street actions illustrates the notion that too often, recourse to people power, as a raw form of direct democracy, leads to an unstable and ungovernable democracy. These disturbances tell us that people power, when abused and overused, can never be a satisfactory means of changing governments. They cannot be a substitute to a process which requires forbearance and tolerance to work.

Tampering with the process can set off a chain of self-dueling events. The tampering with the impeachment process during the Senate trial of President Estrada (through the vote to suppress vital evidence contained in an envelope) set in motion Edsa II, which cut short the term of Estrada. The lesson is that one interference in a constitutional process (the impeachment) can lead to another institutional infringement, the ouster of Estrada. People power can easily turn into habitual mob rule as demonstrated by the Labor Day mob attack on Malacañang.

No matter who mobilizes the mob—whether churchmen, do-gooding middle-class led civil society activists or rabble-rousing demagogues inciting the poor against the rich—the effect is the same. The rule of law or process is overthrown by the rule of the rabble, using the streets as the venue for forcing political change rather than channeling grievances into processes and institutions.

Since the legitimation of the Macapagal regime by the Supreme Court in a series of decisions, the Court itself has become a lightning rod for mob action, instigated by parties adversely affected by its rulings. The threat of mob rule can never overturn judicial decisions and correct the legal basis of such decisions. Mob rule is driven by anger.

As the country remembers Edsa I today, it faces the threat of mob rule as the Supreme Court deliberates on the petition to disqualify an opposition presidential candidate on the ground of alleged non-compliance with the constitutional criterion that only natural-born Filipinos can run for president. Partisan hotheads have warned of civil war if Fernando Poe Jr. is disqualified.

Whatever may be its verdict, we are sure that the Court will decide the case after a careful consideration of the law and evidence. It is certain that the Court will bow less to threat than to process. The threat is an interference in the judicial process—the rule of law—and a contumacious attack on judicial independence.

Civil war cannot be taken lightly. It is a horrible slaughter the likes of which we have never seen in this country but which were experienced by the Americans during their civil war, the French during their revolution, the Chinese during their civil war, and the Russians during the Stalinist mass purges after the triumph of the Bolshevik revolution.

Civil war can make our Edsa series a Sunday picnic in the park, which they indeed were. Civil wars explode from fundamental issues more incendiary than judicial decisions over constitutional qualifications for the presidency.

The issue being decided by the Court is, however, not trivial. The issue involves citizenship rights. Those who take lightly the citizenship criterion—without first ascertaining their citizenship when aspiring for the presidency—may open themselves to the charge that they are making constitutional shortcuts to the presidency. This is why, whatever the political motives of those who filed the petition for disqualification, they have brought this important issue to a head. This shortcut is more serious than educational short-cuts because it makes a mockery of the Constitution.

Raising the threat of people power or civil war to keep the Court from rendering a carefully studied decision denigrates the function of direct popular sovereignty as an instrument to effect a change of government. It distorts people power as an agent of change. It entrenches people power as the cutting edge of mob rule. Eighteen years after Edsa I, we should already have channeled people power into the dikes of institutions and processes.

America's 'show-biz' president

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"DEADLINES Past" is the title of a book by Walter R. Mears, who for over 40 years as a correspondent, analyst, columnist and executive of the Associated Press, covered presidential campaigns from Kennedy, Nixon and Ford, to Carter, Reagan, George Bush, Clinton and "Dubya."

Sub-titled "Forty Years of Presidential Campaigning: A Reporter's Story," the book is a riveting account of the evolution of American politics through much of the last century. Reporting from the sidelines, from the campaign bus and plane, churning out stories about events even as they happened, Mears had a front-row seat to presidential campaigns, observing the candidates first-hand, fending off the spin doctors and making sense out of the mountain of press releases, policy papers and feeds.

Because we're in the middle of a national campaign, I found Mears' book fascinating, yielding insights that could very well apply to the Philippines, whose political culture, after all, is patterned closely after that of the United States.

Even as we hit ourselves over the head with the possibility of another actor-president, Americans, as Mears reminds us, were not themselves above falling for style over substance, illusion over reality. While he found Ronald Reagan personally affable and a great if distant source, Mears, ever the reporter, keeps track of his lapses in policy, the all-too-easy way he left the running of the White House to his deputies, the untroubled manner with which he shifted gears and contradicted himself. It wasn't so much that Reagan was careless and deceitful, Mears implies, but that the American people let him pull the wool over the eyes—for eight years.

The people had elected a "Great Communicator" and a beloved icon, but not the Great President his supporters make Reagan out to be. Here's a veteran reporter's assessment of this American show-biz president—and what a "Panday President" could also be.

* * *

"WATCHING it all, I thought the Reagan operation had the flavor of a sound and light show, mixed with some sleight of hand magic. Just watch the man in the spotlight and enjoy the display. Never mind the mundane details—the soaring budget deficits, the tax increases that nibbled at Reagan's big tax cut, or, worse, the casualty rate of enforcing administration foreign policy, the terrorist massacre of Marines in Beirut. The economy was up for most Americans, despite nagging unemployment. The great communicator was just that. As he said, America was back—from the fading mess of Watergate, the torment of Vietnam and the muddled term of Democratic rule that followed Nixon's resignation and Ford's brief succession. Americans wanted to believe in themselves again, and for the vast majority, that included believing in Reagan...

"There was no misreading the outlook against the Democrats. Conventional wisdom before the 1984 campaign was that Reagan would win unless something disastrous happened. Something disastrous did occur, more than once. But it didn't matter. Crises that would have been the undoing of a less venerated politician flowed off Reagan as though he'd been a bystander to casualties abroad, deepening debt at home and ethics shadows over appointees. Reagan's foes said he was a disengaged president who let his lieutenants run things in his name. One Democratic crack was that they knew he'd run for a second term because he had left a wake-up call for 1984. But the best lines the opposition could manage were no match for Reagan's winning, self-deprecating showmanship. 'What's all this talk about a breakdown in White House communications?' he asked. 'How come nobody told me?' Well, Reagan said, he'd fix that. 'From now on, about anything that happens, no matter what time it is, wake me, even if it's in the middle of a Cabinet meeting...'

* * *

"WITH A CAMPAIGN month to go, the age issue Reagan had been deflecting suddenly got serious for him. While he'd always made a joke of it, his strategists had been wary of the question all year. I never thought his age was the real problem; it was his disengagement, the sense that he was out of touch, the face and voice of the administration but not its hands-on executive. In 1981, US warplanes shot down Libyan jets that had challenged them off the coast of Libya. That underscored toughness in administration policy, but left questions about Reagan's command of it when the White House acknowledged the president had been sleeping at the time and was not told of the episode for six hours.

"Mondale kept trying to stir the disengagement question. 'I'm not sure which is worse,' he said, 'the arrogance of Mr. Reagan's isolation or his belief that the American people would let him get away with it.' Whatever the merits of the accusation, the belief was the fact. Except for Democratic partisans, people weren't concerned about Reagan's way of governing, and they liked his public, great communicator style. The Democrats said he wasn't good without a script, that he was a performer with prompters, using lines he knew by rote, with index card reminders always handy in case he forgot a point. A Mondale manager told me that if they could just shuffle those index cards, they'd have a chance to beat Reagan...

"When Reagan left office in 1989, he had the highest job approval ratings an outgoing president ever held, 68 percent. He was the first president in 60 years to turn the job over to an elected successor of his own party. His genius was not in the details but in avoiding them.

"In an uncertain world, Reagan stood for certainty, I wrote as he left office. He was unwavering, absolute in his convictions, never more so than when he was changing them. His style not only succeeded, it triumphed."

Folk remedies

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE of the scenes etched permanently in my memory was the morning after the Pinatubo eruption. Coming in from abroad, I noticed that the airport was unusually dark for a Manila afternoon. I didn't give it much thought. I learned the next day that we were the last flight allowed to land that day. Heavy ash fall caused the rerouting of other aircraft scheduled to land in Manila that afternoon.

Next morning I went to Mass in the Benedictine Abbey in Mendiola and noticed that the city was covered with fine white ash. The cloister garden was coated in such a way that it looked like a scene out of "Winter Wonderland," except that it was not cold. The Abbey sacristan, Dom. Gabriel Asejo, wondered aloud whether this ash from heaven could be used on people's foreheads on Ash Wednesday.

Only then did I learn that the ashes imposed on devout foreheads on Ash Wednesday are the burnt palms used during Palm Sunday or Domingo de Ramos the year before.

All around the country one can see these dried *palaspas* folded and braided in the nicest ways adorning windows and doors of houses. More than mere decoration or the advertisement that a Catholic lives in the home, it is believed that these blessed palms would drive off evil spirits, *aswangs*, robbers, kidnappers and, of course, thunder and lightning.

Today we begin the 40 days of Lent. Being a day of fasting and abstinence, most practicing Catholics will have only one meal and it will not be of bread and water but probably fish. Through the years, abstaining from meat on the Fridays of Lent has been taken to mean feasting on seafood. This can also explain why the rich and hearty mongo soup is usually served on Fridays.

Lent for me is more than Catholic observance. It reminds me of so many folk practices and beliefs that turn up at this time of year, leading to a climax during Holy Week.

A few days ago, I was reading an interview of an Argentinian soap opera star who is doing a show in the Philippines. During his vacation back in Argentina, he narrated his own experiences with ghosts and elementals and his mother gave him a Medalla de San Benito for protection against "*mumu*." To think that Argentina is halfway round the world, and yet the response is almost the same.

A whole section in the two-volume "Encyclopedia of Folk Beliefs and Customs" compiled by the Jesuit Francisco Demetrio (Xavier University, 1991) covers folk medicine. I consulted the book to see how left-over ash from Ash Wednesday was used in other ways and found so many folk remedies for all kinds of diseases.

Naturally sacramentals—holy water, crucifix, rosary, medals, novenas, *estampitas*, images of saints, etc.—figure in a lot of folk remedies. Some folk beliefs about their effects are quite, like the one traced to Iligan City which holds that it is bad for a sick person to be visited by a priest, and worse if the sick is administered Extreme Unction because then he would die. We all die anyway, so I am wondering whether it is better to die with the sacrament than without it.

Some people don't agree. The more fantastic cures are as follows:

Unripe papaya is used as a cure for appendicitis. But this isn't half as bad as taking the *butculon* of a chicken for same appendicitis. This is supposed to be the part of the intestine (?) where the waste material of the chicken is collected. The innermost yellowish layer is separated and broiled as a cure that seems worse than the disease.

Asthma is a common disease for which many remedies have been prescribed, ranging from dog meat, monkey meat, broiled centipede and roasted house lizard.

One cure for baldness is cheap but disgusting. You catch a fly (or seven flies), crush them and rub the paste on the bald part to make hair grow.

The cure for bedwetting has to be quoted lest readers think I am making it up: "A child who often urinates in bed can be cured by pouring a pail of water on him. No one must laugh when this is done." (The first part is easy; the second almost impossible.)

There are many remedies for snake bite, the most unusual being the first excrement of a child applied to the wound externally and also taken internally! This is preserved in bottles and called "triaca" or "theriacum." The squeamish has the option of making a cut near the wound and applying ginger and garlic directly on it.

Infants or babies who keep people awake with their crying are cured by undergoing fumigation with various elements, ranging from blessed candles to fish and seaweed. So far the worst cure for a crybaby is whipping with coconut midrib or *tingting*.

There are many remedies for sore eyes: excrement from red-feathered chicken, ground bedbugs mixed with oil, urine, breast milk and a child's urine.

Hemorrhage is cured with roasted and powdered earthworm mixed with coffee.

One can have a smooth face without going to a dermatologist by just applying the first menstrual blood on the face. Pimples are also cured with the first menstrual blood, or nicotine from cigarettes, powdered cockroach intestine, rice wash, tea or wiping the face with the underwear of a girl who is menstruating for the first time.

Most of these folk cures have disappeared in the wake of modern medicine, but knowing them helps us appreciate living in the 21st century and helps us understand or to be puzzled by the past.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

The mysterious Dagohoy tales

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WE often associate folklore with remote villages and ancient times, forgetting that there are contemporary forms of folklore as well, thriving quite well in the most urban of environments.

Today, the Internet is the most powerful medium for modern folklore, which still pretty much fulfills the same functions as ancient tales. The epic poems with folk heroes performing the most fantastic feats constitute only one genre. Another category (which is actually more popular) are the stories of supernatural creatures preying on mortals. Today, these stories are more down to earth, the most popular villains being computer viruses, snakes lurking around in mall dressing rooms, predatory taxi drivers and dates carrying around horse sedatives to slip into their dates' drink. All of these are myths, of course, but are there reflecting modern anxieties and fears.

Modern urban folklore also tends to be much more political now, consisting of the latest rumors about officials and now, electoral candidates. Sometimes the folklore takes the form of jokes, usually sent around by texts, but you also occasionally have longer ones that circulate through e-mail.

Urban folklore mutates rapidly, mainly because so many copies go around so quickly. People embellish the tales or jokes, adding or deleting, often updating according to current events.

An excellent example of this mutation comes with the intriguing "Story of Dagohoy," two versions of which have been going around. Let me give you the shorter one first:

It was the first day of school in Washington, D.C. and a new student named Dagohoy, the son of a Filipino immigrant, entered the fourth grade.

The teacher began, "Let's review some American history, class. Who said 'Give me liberty or give me death?'" She saw a sea of blank faces, except for Dagohoy's who had his hand up.

"Patrick Henry, 1775," he said.

"Very good," said the teacher.

"Who said 'Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth'"?

Again, no response except from Dagohoy: "Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg, 1863," he said.

The teacher snaps at the class, "Class, you should be ashamed. Dagohoy who is new to our country knows more about our history than you do."

She hears a loud whisper from the back: "Screw the Filipinos."

"Who said that?" she demanded.

Dagohoy put his hand up. "General John Pershing, Manila, 1896," he said

At that point, Jack, another student says, "I'm going to puke."

The teacher glares and asks, "All right! Now, who said that?"

Again Dagohoy answers, "George Bush Sr. to the Japanese prime minister during the state dinner, Tokyo, 1991."

Now furious, another student yells, "Oh yeah? S--- this!!"

Dagohoy jumps out of his chair waving his hand and shouts to the teacher at the top of his voice, "Bill Clinton to Monica Lewinsky, the Oval Office, 1997!!"

Someone shouts, "You little s--t, if you say anything else, I'll kill you."

Dagohoy yells, "Congressman Gary Condit to Chandra Levy, Washington, D.C., 2001!"

The teacher faints.

"I'm outta here!" mutters one student as he sidles to the door.

"President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Baguio City, Dec. 30, 2002!!" Dagohoy responds.

As the class gathers around her on the floor, someone says, "Oh s--t, now we're really in big trouble!"

"Saddam Hussein, on the Iraq invasion, Baghdad, May 2003!" Dagohoy bellows.

"Now, I really have to run," Jack mutters, heading for the exit.

"Gloria Macapagal Arroyo again, Pampanga, Oct. 4, 2003!!!" Dagohoy shouts triumphantly, jumping with glee.

* * *

Folklore is almost always anonymous, but I think readers will agree with me that this was probably first written up by a Filipino living in the States. Note how the story lampoons both Filipino and American politicians, with Saddam Hussein thrown in for good measure. I also suspect the one who wrote this up is more familiar with US history and current events than with those back home in the Philippines. There's a little lapse in the author's reference to General Pershing's alleged statement, supposedly made in Manila in 1896. Pershing was an American general assigned to the Philippines in the 20th century, not 1896, and he was assigned to Muslim Mindanao, not Manila.

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In the end, we can just sit back and laugh as we see this updated reference to FPJ. Folklore appeals because we can relate to the characters. We're laughing, as usual, at ourselves, but there's more:

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LETTERS

Financial interests vs moral dictates

THERE'S something disturbing in the assertion made by television giants GMA 7 and ABS-CBN that it is the consumers who dictate what kind of programs put on air. That surely is the reason why we have the Chinese-made telenovelas controlling the prime time airwaves these days, never mind if the lead characters have talent or not. Face value is what matters. The phenomenal success of these Chinese telenovelas has gone far indeed and ABS-CBN and GMA 7 have successfully fortified this existing culture of "seeing" society.

Another craze that toed the line of this culture is the recent GMA production "Starstruck," supposed to be patterned after the famous US TV show "American Idol," in search of young talents with the potential of becoming celebrity stars. It was appalling to see the "Starstruck" finalists strutting off their supposed "talents" in groovy music.

But what do they have other than their faces—their spruced-up packaging, some patterned after the famed F4 group? And yet, without much respect for the aesthetics of dance and music, they became finalists, instant celebrities, lionized here and there.

"The tri-media productions overwhelm the social mind, influence the social taste and determine cultural direction," says poet Cirilo Bautista. And because it is an instant hit, advertisers invest their millions in this kind of culture that does not lend to the refinement of national intellect.

Here comes the corporate social responsibility of media, including the advertising world. Media have always been regarded as a powerful tool in promoting or breaking public acceptance of any issue, especially in the 21st century. In the Philippines, sad to say, gone are the days of "Ryan, Ryan Musikahan," "Tatak Pinoy," "Uncle Bob's Friends," "Pep Talk" and the like. Corporate self-interest often prevails over moral dictates. "If media companies are to remain credible in the 21st century, they must increasingly look at their own corporate social responsibilities," says Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, assistant executive director of the United Nations Environmental Program.

The kind of competition we see between GMA 7 and ABS-CBN makes us even more Third World. Unwittingly, they make our political system horrible in the eyes of the community of nations.

—ANGEL ALEGRE,
119 Bignay St.,
Project 2, Quezon City

Why FPJ is a natural-born Filipino

I BELIEVE Fernando Poe Jr. is a natural-born Filipino citizen.

The *jus soli* principle was abandoned by the Supreme Court only on Sept. 30, 1939 in the case of Chua vs Secretary of Labor, GR No. L-46451, 40 OG 2nd Supp. 244. Nonetheless, in the case of Torres vs Tan Chim (GR No. L-46593, decided on June 27, 1940, 40 OG 8th Supp. 122, No. 12, 20 September 1941), the Supreme Court reverted to the rule of *jus soli* laid down in the cases prior to the decision in the case of Chua vs Secretary, supra. (Reference: "Citizenship, Naturalization, Immigration and Alien Registration Laws," 1998 Fourth Edition)

The legitimacy or illegitimacy of FPJ is immaterial to his being a natural-born Filipino citizen. The 1935 Constitution simply provides that those whose fathers are citizens of the Philippines are considered Filipino citizens. There is no qualification as to legitimacy. The jurisprudence about an illegitimate child of a Filipino mother and an alien father is not applicable to FPJ. Nonetheless, the jurisprudence even favors the Filipino citizenship of the illegitimate child. And why not FPJ?

The 1935 Constitution did not prohibit dual allegiance. Neither did the 1935 Constitution disallow the *jus soli* principle. It is only in the 1987 Constitution that dual allegiance is prohibited which means that the *jus soli* principle is expressly abandoned. Ironically, we enacted a law that allows Filipinos to have dual citizenship.

Since at the time of FPJ's birth on Aug. 20, 1939 the *jus soli* principle was the prevailing rule observed by the Supreme Court, then there is no doubt that FPJ is a natural-born Filipino citizen. The subsequent abandonment of the *jus soli* principle by the Supreme Court on Sept. 30, 1939 could not have deprived the then barely month-old FPJ of his political status as a natural-born Filipino citizen that he already earned in a second upon his birth. Neither would the ambivalence of the Supreme Court in June 1940 do.

—FRANK E. LOBRIGO,
One Doña J. Guevara Street,
Cabagñan West, Legazpi City

KR2 still on

I REFER to an INQUIRER article (PDI, 1/26/03) on the supposed removal of the Philippines by the Japanese government from its Japanese Grant Aid for Increased Food Production Program, also known as KR2.

The Philippines has been a recipient of the KR2 grant since its inception in 1977 and the program has been implemented annually until 2001. The program could not be implemented in 2002 due to a significant cut in the KR2 budget, affecting not only the Philippines but other recipient countries, such as Indonesia, Senegal, Mauritania and Mali.

Contrary to what was reported in the article, the Philippines has not been removed completely from the KR2 program. Unfortunately, Joseph Z. Sison, Philippine agricultural attaché to Japan, was misquoted and misunderstood when his comments on the issue of the KR2 program were interpreted to mean that the Philippines has been removed from all future implementation of the KR2 program.

In fact, an inter-agency committee of the Japanese government is currently reviewing the matter and will in all likelihood extend again the KR2 grant to the Philippines. A decision is expected in mid-February, and the Philippines looks forward to receiving the grant.

KR2's objective is to increase food production through the supply of farm inputs and machinery for more efficient agricultural production. Despite the opposition of NGOs to the program, citing the negative impact of fertilizers such as ammonium sulphate on soil condition, the assistance received from the KR2 program has had undeniable positive impact on the livelihood of Filipino farmers. The expected extension of the grant will undoubtedly continue to upgrade the productivity and efficiency of Filipino farmers and support income-generating activities.

For example, the Philippines anticipates receiving agricultural machinery which shall be used for technology demonstration activities in Regions 11, 12 and the ARMM in line with the thrust of the government to develop Mindanao as the food bowl of the country. The machinery will be used for pilot demonstration to introduce local farmers in the regions to cost-effective and modern means of rice production.

—DOMINGO L. SIAZON JR.,
RP ambassador to Japan

I STAND by my story. Joseph Sison, the Philippine agriculture attaché to Japan, can talk about our interview with him. The Philippines was not in the list of beneficiaries last year and this year the government is asking that we be included again.

—CHRISTINE GAYLICAN,
PDI reporter

Poe's actual business experience

THIS is with reference to your editorial last Feb. 21 wherein I was quoted as saying "From there we can generate jobs and then others (*sic*) will fall into place."

I wish to clarify that the above statement, made though a mobile phone conversation, was part of a discussion on economic growth and development. Thus, I was talking of "other factors required for economic growth and development."

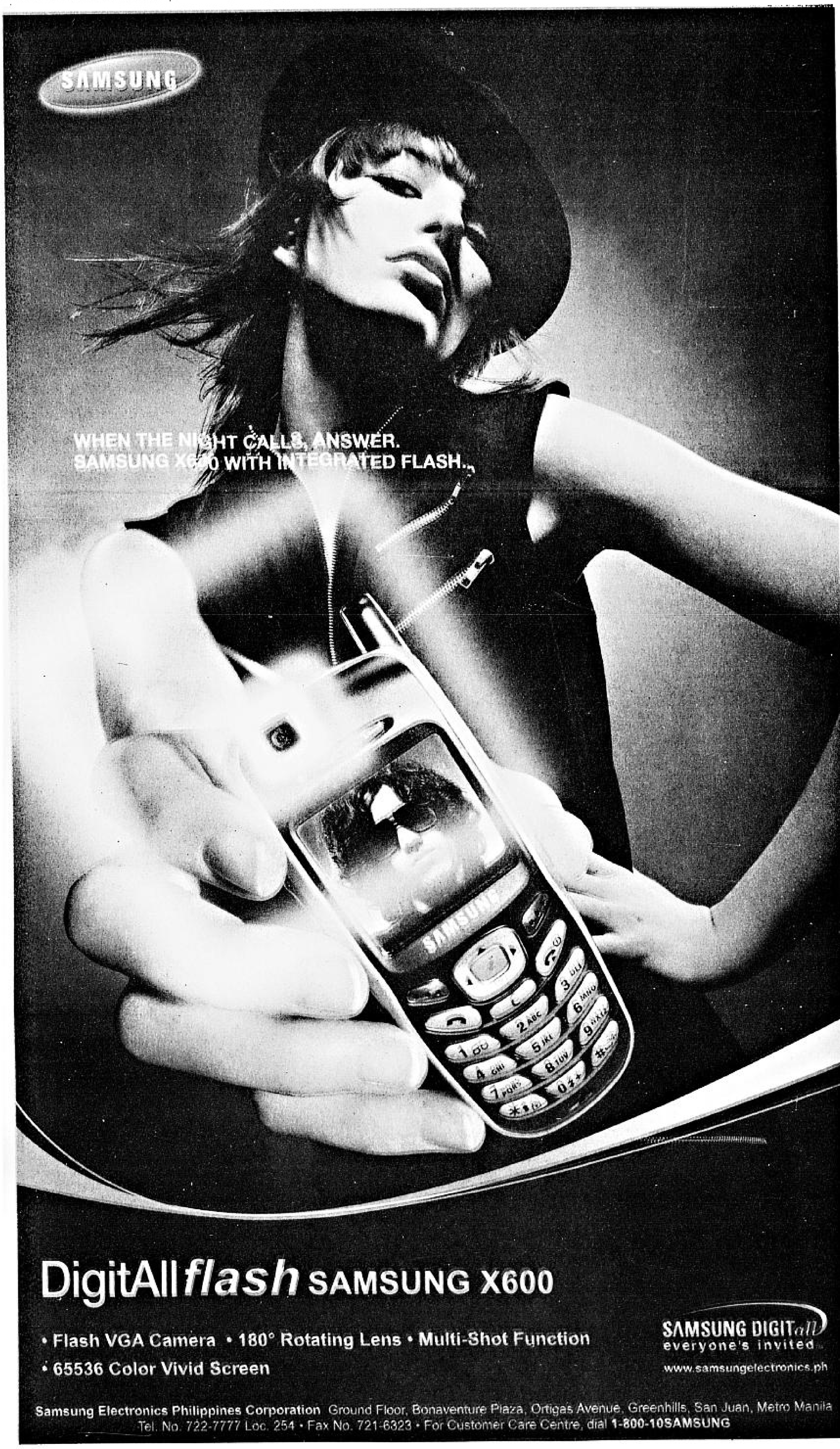
Also, on the editorial question "But if Poe were so bright, why did he not finish high school?" Fernando Poe Jr. was unable to finish his secondary schooling because, as he relayed to us, when his father passed away, he had to stop schooling to get a job and help his family.

Finally, on the editorial statement "But anyone who says effective governance can be crammed into a few brief lessons is a fraud."

There is no question that effective governance cannot be crammed into a few brief lessons. Precisely, FPJ's expertise in corporate governance has spanned several decades. From his experience, he has developed very clear and sound views on prudent fiscal management, cost efficiency, product competitiveness and a level playing field, among other things.

The business community will be very comfortable in having a president who has actual business experience, knows what a favorable business environment is, and (from the point of view of a businessman) what government should do to create it.

—BENJAMIN A.I. ESPIRITU, chair,
Business and Governance
Department, De La Salle University,
2401 Taft Avenue, Manila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Ikaw, ano'ng gimik mo ngayong February 25?

Ngayon ay ika-18 nang Anibersaryo ng People Power.
Gunitain natin ang tunay na diwa nito: ang pagpapabuti ng
kalagayan ng bayan sa pamamagitan ng sama-samang pagkilos
ng mga mamamayan. Gandang isipin,'di ba?
At lalong magandang aksyunan!

Isantabi muna natin ang sariling interes at ilaan ang ating sarili
--- magvolunteer ng oras, pawis, talento, kakayahan at puso ---
sa iba't ibang projects na isasagawa ngayong araw na ito,
para sa ikabubuti ng mga kapwa nating Pilipino
at ng sambayanang minamahal.

Mahaba ang listahan ng pangangailangan ng bayan; napakaraming paraan upang ikaw ay makatulong. Sa bawat eskwela, parish, village, o barangay, siguradong may listahang tulad nito. Mag-usisa at mag-sign up! Everyone is welcome, maging bata man o matanda. You can also join as co-workers in a corporation.

Feb.25 ---
gawin nating Araw ng Paglilingkod.
Araw ng Pakikibahagi.
Araw ng Karangalan para sa ating lahat.
Yan ang People Power.

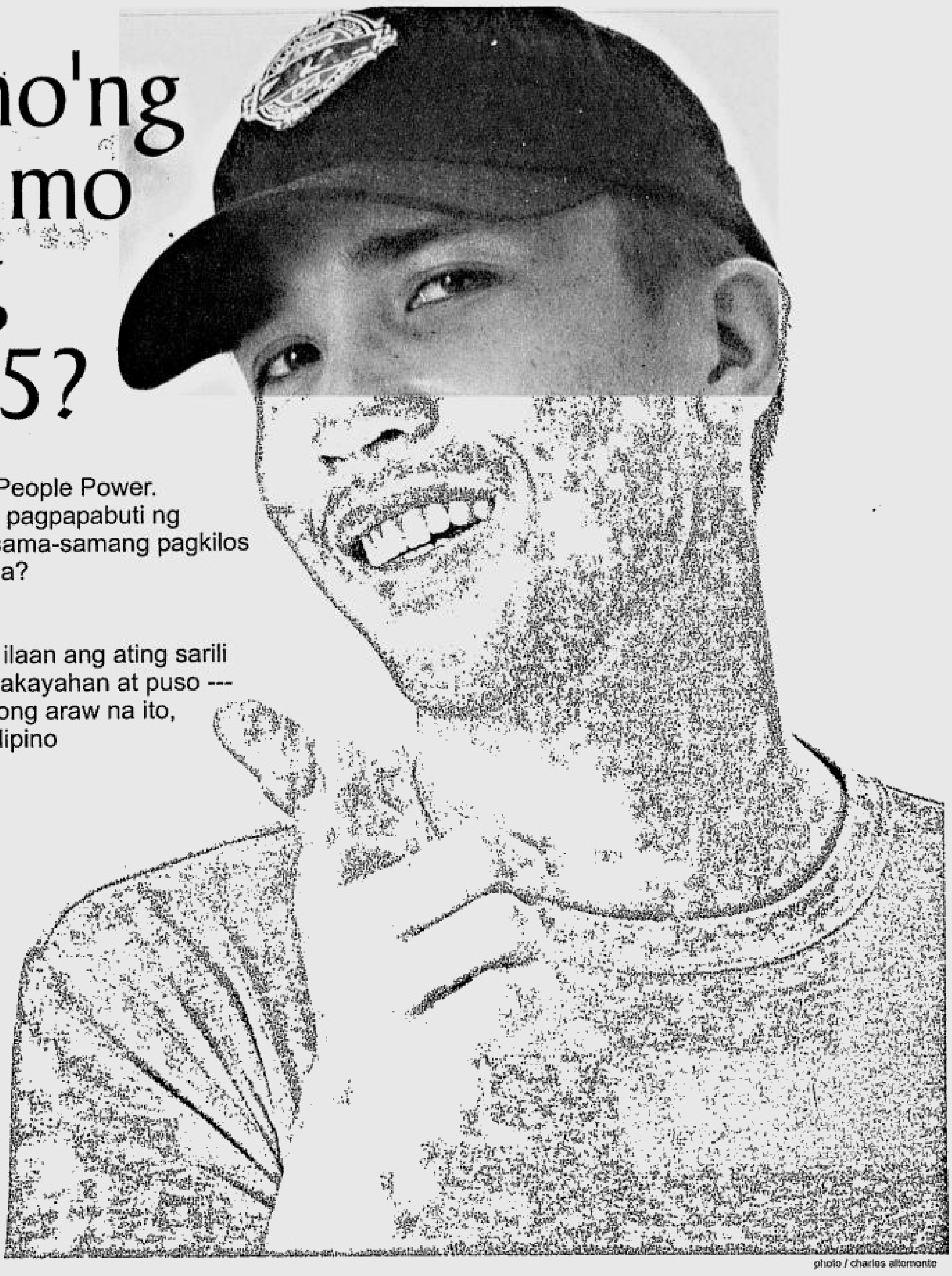

photo / charles altomonte

People Pawis Day Activities

Feb. 22 - 25

People Power Bayanihan Tungo sa Kalusugan / Ligtas Tigdas
Immunization drive led by DOH-CHD in densely populated communities in 17 cities and municipalities.
718-3098 for details

People Power para sa Kalusugan
Immunization / Heart Card Program led by Merck, Sharp & Dohme / Makati Health Dept.
878-6338 for details

People Power Clean-up & Waste Management
Information campaign / seedling distribution / clean up led by DENR.
929-6626 for details

School-based Community Assistance Program
DepEd / CHED

Social Welfare Services
Care for elderly and children at risk, led by DSWD

Youth Build
Construction of houses for marginalized communities led by Habitat for Humanity.
0917 833-7504 for details

Feb. 25

Wreath-laying Ceremony
6:30 am, Libingan ng mga Bayani

Flag-raising Ceremony
7:30 am, People Power Monument

People Power sa Halalan
8 -11:30 am, La Salle Greenhills
> Voter's education / pledge for honest & peaceful elections led by NAMFREL / PPCRV
> Young Voters' Caravan led by Youth Alliance Phils.
> People Pawis Fair Volunteers' sign-up led by People Power People Movement

Katanungan sa Kandidato
20 questions formulated by the Pagbabago@Pilipinas that you can ask your candidates.
pagbabago04@yahoo.com
http/pagbabago.tripod.com

People Power Over Poverty
> Gawad Kalinga "Rising from the Ashes" - 8 am-3 pm BASECO
> Gawad Kalinga "Rising from the Garbage" / Konsiyerto sa Paradise Mountain - 3-8 pm, Smokey Mountain

Celebration of Holy Mass
12:15 pm, EDSA Shrine
Officiated by H.E. Cardinal Sin

Jesus Revolution Convergence Launching
8 am - 8 pm, Cuneta Astrodome

40-Day National Prayer & Fasting for Peaceful & Credible Elections
Launch in all communities / municipalities led by Catholic Protestant Evangelical & Muslim Congregation

Freedom Cup Race
5 pm, San Lazaro Leisure Park Carmona, Cavite
Organized by Philippine Racing Commission to celebrate Freedom Day to honor the heroes of EDSA 1

Youth Caravan led by Youth Alliance Philippines, partners@youthalliance.ph

Other year-round People Pawis cooperators:
DILG/ Soroptomists International Caloocan City / Chino Roces Foundation / Kalampagin ang Konsyensyang Kinakalawang / Manila Jockey Club EDSA TAPAT-DLSU / Sanggunian ng Mag-aaral ng Ateneo / Ayala Young Leaders Alliance / CNLI Alumni / Abot Kamay Youth Council / @62 / White Forum Rizal Technical University / DLSU / FEU / Student Council / University of Asia & the Pacific Student Council / PYNOI / Unang Lingap-Kapwa Foundation MAP International / Children International / Spirit of EDSA Foundation / Kilos-Bayan / PhilHealth / CCI Asia

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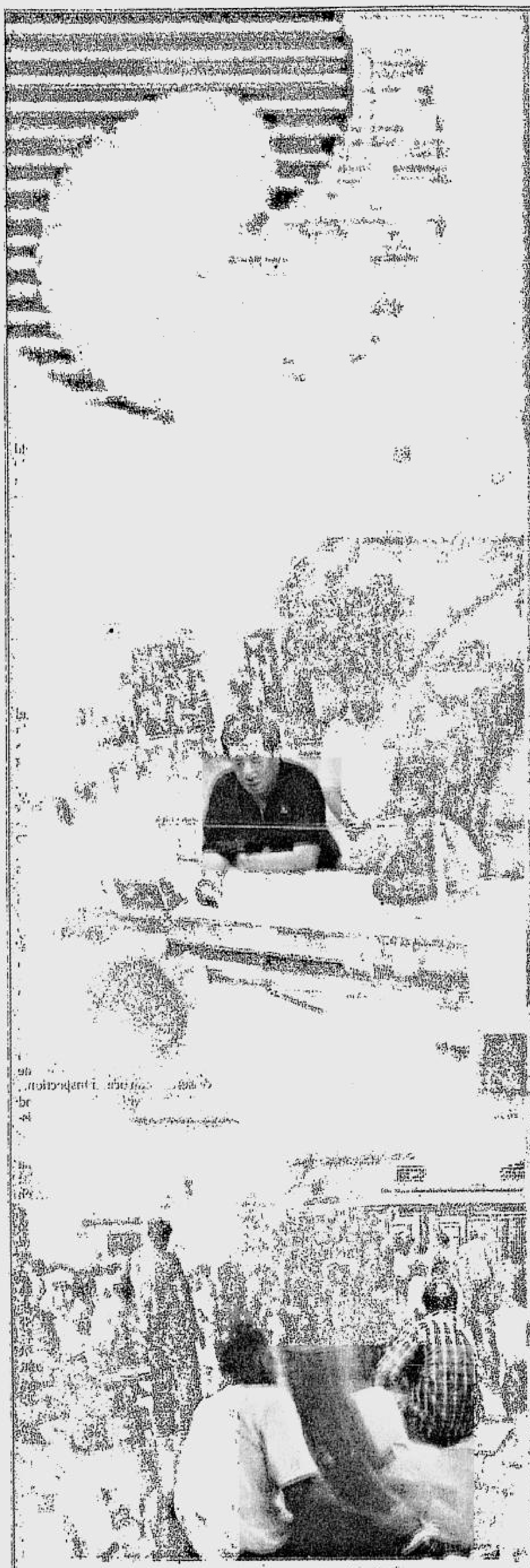

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⇛ As a matter of Policy, we will deduct your loans in default from the proceeds of your claim or new loan.

⇛ If there are loan amortizations made by you which do not appear in our records, please present evidence of payment so that we can adjust your claims and loan proceeds.

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2004

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Strike cripples Iloilo transportation

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Around 90 percent of public transport in the city and province of Iloilo was paralyzed yesterday at the start of a two-day strike of transport groups to demand the rollback of oil prices, a P1 increase in fare and the scrapping of a city ordinance that bars the entry of public utility vehicles from the province to the city's main streets.

Classes in all levels were suspended in most schools in the city. A skeletal force manned the offices at the provincial capitol and city hall. Stores remained open but there were few customers except in big shopping malls.

The strike was led by the Pinag-isang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (Piston) in Iloilo and the Hugpong Transport, an alliance of at least 26 transport groups in the city and province.

Groups of operators of jeepneys, taxicabs, buses and vans joined the strike, which was expected to end at midnight today.

Transport groups in Nueva Valencia town in the island-province of Guimaras also stopped plying their route, said Roberto Abellon Jr., Piston-Iloilo coordinator.

Trips of ferryboats between the cities of Iloilo, Bacolod and Guimaras remained normal.

Around 500 protesters led by the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) assembled in three key intersections starting at 5 a.m. yesterday to show their support to the strike.

The transport groups are calling for the repeal of the Oil Deregulation Law, which they blame for the series of oil price increases by the giant oil companies Shell, Caltex and Petron.

The Ibon Databank said that based on its computations, the oil firms overpriced their products by 91 centavos per liter from December 2002 to December 2003.

The actual daily sales of oil products reached 50.34 million liters as of September last year, of which the three giant oil companies account for around 86 percent.

"The huge amount that Petron, Shell, and Caltex earned from profiteering strengthens their hold on the local oil market and exposes the failure of deregulation," said Ibon executive director Rosario Guzman in a statement.

The striking groups also demanded that Regulation Ordinance No. 2002-408 (Perimeter Boundary Ordinance) be scrapped because it would not solve the city's worsening traffic.

With its implementation, drivers and small operators would lose a monthly income of P1,600 because they have to pay P20 each time they use privately-owned terminals in the city's outskirts.

Pampanga drivers end 2-day strike after GMA agrees to hear demands

ANGELES CITY—Some 67,000 protesting drivers in Pampanga ended their two-day strike at 1 p.m. on Tuesday after President Macapagal-Arroyo agreed to hear their demands for a P1 fare increase and a rollback in oil prices, local transport leaders said.

Waldy Santos, spokesperson of the Pampanga chapter of the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston), said an emissary of Ms Macapagal had called on Piston national leaders on Monday night to offer a dialogue.

Santos did not identify the representative but said the opportunity to bring the issues to her was the start of possible favorable actions from the government.

The strike, which started at 6 a.m. on Monday in the province's 20 towns and two cities, was stopped seven hours ahead of schedule.

Nationwide

Santos said the strike was also a preparation for the nationwide transport protest scheduled in the first week of March.

Police officials claimed that the protest affected only Angeles City and the towns of Mabalacat, Arayat, Magalang and Porac.

But Santos said the strike crippled almost 90 percent of Pampanga's transportation network.

More than 20 schools, including three universities in the cities of San Fernando and Angeles, remained closed on Tuesday because of the strike, according to Dr. Ricardo Sibug, Department of Education assistant director in Central Luzon.

Rene Romero, private sector representative in the regional development council, said the economic losses resulting from the strike have yet to be assessed.

Prepared

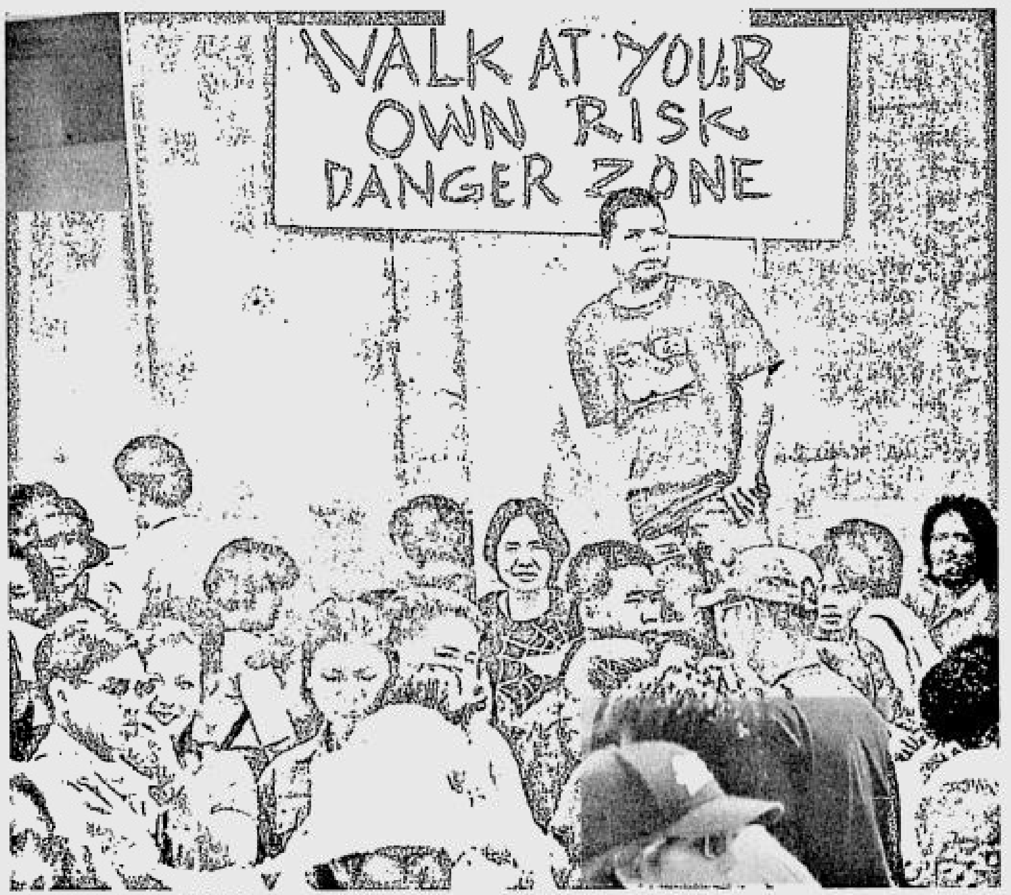
An informal survey he made among the local business community showed that "99 percent didn't feel the impact because they prepared for (the strike)."

According to him, many companies resorted to car pooling or mobilizing vehicles to pick up their employees and bring them to work or back home on time.

As members of the local chapter of Piston stopped the strike, another national transport group, the Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator ng Pilipinas (Stop) braced for a Northern and Central Luzon-wide strike on March 1.

Tom Talavera, spokesperson of Stop in Central Luzon, said the protest demands the scrapping of the oil deregulation law, which the government uses in favoring oil companies, and an end to "exorbitant" fees by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

Drivers also went on strike in Cebu and Iloilo to protest rising prices of oil and demand a P1 increase in fare. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

FLOWER FESTIVAL
Spectators take shelter from the rains during the Panagbenga parade in Baguio City.

Inquirer correspondent buried in Samar

VILLAREAL, Samar—The body of Inquirer correspondent Marc Villavicencio was laid to rest in a Catholic cemetery here last Feb. 18, nine days after he died of heart failure. He was 37.

His father Marcelino, a doctor, said his eldest son died at about 9 a.m. of Feb. 9, minutes after he ate his breakfast.

But he said Marc had been suffering from a heart disease for three years.

Villavicencio, 37, joined the INQUIRER as its correspondent for Samar last year but he had been a journalist since 1984.

Past work

Before he joined the INQUIRER, Villavicencio wrote for other national dailies. He was also a correspondent of the defunct Philippine News and Features. He was also a staff member of the regional newspaper the Eastern Visayas Herald based in Tacloban City, Leyte.

The eldest among five siblings, Villavicencio also served as a municipal councilor of Villareal from 1998 to 2001. His mother Manuela has taken his post in the municipal council.

He is survived by his parents Marcelino and Manuela and siblings Monty, Maila, May and Leandro. *Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Ship owner says vessel safe to carry liquid ammonia

By Margaux Ortiz

THE OWNER of the sea vessel that seeks to transport ammonia in bulk has decried recent reports tagging his ship as a "floating bomb."

Tomas Tan, owner of the MV Golden Swan, said his ship is fully equipped with all the safety facilities and equipment needed to transport ammonia and has complied with all the safety standards set by law.

Tan said in a report submitted by a technical team authorized by the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) Board, the board resolved that MV Golden Swan could safely carry liquefied ammonia in its existing pressurized bullet tanks.

Tan said contrary to reports, Marina administrator Oscar Sevilla never rendered a decision not to grant a certificate to the vessel after an ocular inspection.

"It is not within the power and authority of the Marina administrator to issue a certificate of inspection," Tan said.

He said under existing Marina regulations, the Philippine Coast Guard is deputized to issue such certifications.

Tan also said there was no truth to reports that Coast Guard Commandant Reuben Lista refused to issue a permit for Golden Swan to carry liquefied ammonia because of the ship owner's failure to present a list of guidelines on the ship's safety standards.

"How could that be? It is not our responsibility to produce that list of guidelines," Tan said.

He said Golden Swan is merely an applicant for a renewal of its certificate of inspection based on Marina and Coast Guard rules.

Tan also said the Marina did not issue any cease and desist order against Golden Swan on Sept. 22, 2002, April and October 2003.

He said the lone cease and desist order issued on Feb. 22, 2002 was lifted by the Marina board in a resolution on March 12, 2003.

The resolution allowed Golden Swan to resume operations as a landing craft transport after the approval of its permits earlier granted by Sevilla, Tan said.

"An application for issuance of a vessel's CI (certificate of inspection) is not an adversarial proceeding," said Tan.

Bayan Muna seeks cops' help in finding 2 abducted members

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Human rights groups in Eastern Visayas have called on the police to help them find two members of Bayan Muna who were abducted by seven armed men last Feb. 21 in Baybay town, Leyte.

"We are appealing to them (police) to help us find Jacklyn Paguntalan and Roland Portaleza and hopefully in fine conditions," said Don Dehayco, secretary-general of the Concerned Citizens for Justice and Peace (CCJP)-Metro Tacloban chapter.

He issued the appeal, even as he raised the possibility that the perpetrators might be members of a military intelligence group.

"The government continues to brand Bayan Muna as a front of the New People's Army, which is unfair. It continues to harass us. Bayan Muna is a legitimate political party," Dehayco said.

Melvin Anino, secretary-general of the Bayan Muna-Eastern Visayas, said Paguntalan, 26, of Taft Eastern Samar; Portaleza, 28, of Ormoc City; and another companion came from Ormoc City and were on their way to attend a party meeting in Baybay last Feb. 21.

The three made a brief stopover at the Agta Beach Resort in Barangay Kilima, Baybay at about 10 a.m. to take snacks.

They were getting on a red TMX 125 motorcycle with Portaleza as the driver when seven armed men forced him and Paguntalan to get into a waiting Delica van with a covered plate number. The van then sped off to a still unknown direction.

Their companion, who was not identified for security reasons, managed to escape and immediately reported the abduction to the Bayan Muna office in Ormoc, which in turn informed its regional office in Tacloban.

The Bayan Muna and the CCJP strongly condemned the abduction, saying it was a "clear indication of harassment by the (Macapagal) regime."

"The abduction of Jacklyn and Roland was an act of harassment against Bayan Muna . . . meant to silence us in promoting new politics, which anchors on serving the people first and for exposing graft and corruption and violation of human rights committed by the (Macapagal) regime," Anino told the INQUIRER.

Bayan Muna has been critical of the Macapagal administration, accusing it of being "corrupt" and of being a "human rights violator."

The Bayan Muna is seeking representation in Congress through the party-list system.

Kidnapped trader moved to North Cotabato

LAMBAYONG, Sultan Kudarat—The Pentagon kidnap gang has moved 52-year-old trader Zoila Kansi from the Liguasan Marsh in Maguindanao to North Cotabato, authorities said yesterday.

The group headed by Alonto Tahir raised anew the ransom demand by P1 million to P6 million.

Councilor Amy Corpuz said Kansi was moved out of the marsh after last week's clash that left four of Tahir's men dead.

Corpuz quoted reports as saying Kansi was being hidden in M'lang, North Cotabato.

Chief Supt. Antonio Billones, Central Mindanao police director, said they were worrying about Kansi's condition.

Billones said relatives of the victim's had told police she has a heart ailment.

Aside from Kansi, the Pentagon is also holding Filipino-Chinese Norman Sia since December.

The kidnappers have been asking Sia's family to pay P10 million in ransom.

But Sia's relatives said the kidnappers erred in abducting him.

They said that the 25-year-old victim, who was abducted on Dec. 8, was actually a driver and hardware store tender and not a car dealer or a businessman.

Cotabato City Mayor Muslimin Sema on Tuesday said he wanted to "set the record straight." *Rosa-May de Guzman, Edwin Fernandez and Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PDI FILE PHOTO

THE WAR on kidnapping has shifted from Metro Manila to Mindanao despite efforts by anti-kidnapping czar Angelo Reyes to assure foreign investors in a recent meeting in Sta. Rosa, Laguna that the government was making headway in its anti-kidnapping campaign.

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Joey Abarrientos, Plant Manager – Kraft Foods (Thailand) Ltd., Powdered Beverage Plant Graduate, 1st PMDP".

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

They changed the course of history

By Tonette Orejas
Angeles City

DE LA ROSA

BUSCAYNO

SANTOS

AQUINO

MANANSALA

MEMORABLE as a term for 99 Kapampangans featured in this month's special issue of the Singsing, the magazine of the Holy Angel University's Juan D. Nepomuceno Center for Kapampangan Studies, is an understatement.

It's a cautious move to preclude controversy that might overshadow the lives of the initial choices. Better to be uniting than divisive in this deeply wounded nation seemed to be the statement.

Well, as the number 99 suggests, the list is incomplete. Already, it's turning out to be a collector's item.

All of 70 pages, Singsing (Ring) gives a quick sense of the past through the lives of the 99 men and women in the Kapampangan region (for despite the changes in the geographical boundaries, the native language extends beyond what is now Pampanga province).

Published less than three months away from the May 10 national and local elections, Singsing's latest edition tells that this country has never been wanting of people who, by their choices and circumstances, helped carve the nation.

"Rebels, visionaries, trailblazers, mavericks, heroes, saints—for better or for worse, these men and women altered the landscape of Kapampangan culture and changed the course of Philippine history," say the editors in the blurb.

They are presented according to historical timeline. Here's a run-through and how Singsing described them:

Malangsik (organized pre-colonial Kapampangan society), Pansonum or Francisco Malang Balagtas (left a will that defined the extent of the territory), Pande Pira (his works shaped warfare and agriculture);

Tarik Soliman (the first Filipino who fought the Spanish colonizers through the Battle of Bangkusay), Francisco Palaot and the early Macabebes (started the 300-year alliance between Spain and the Kapampangans), Juan Manila (among the first to revolt against Spanish abuses);

Martin Sancho (the first Filipino Jesuit), Diego Guinto (his donations produced the native clergy), Juan Salonga (started the tradition of family dynasties in local politics), Martha de San Bernardo (first Filipino nun), Madalena de la Concepcion (living saint of her time), Juan de Guerra (second Filipino martyr);

The Talangpaz sisters (began the Congregation of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters), Andres de la Cruz (boy missionary who brokered peace in Marianas tribes), Nicolas de Figueroa (martyr for Catholic mission), Phelippe Sonsong (left a life of comfort for the faith), Francisco Maniago (led the 1660 wood-cutters revolt against forced labor), Francisco Laksamana (organized 4,000 Kapampangans who helped Spain crush the Chinese revolt), Miguel Jeronimo de Morales and Francisco Baluyot (first Filipino priests);

Blas de Sta. Rosa (first Filipino parish priest), Jose Manalastas (his brave attack on a general nearly ended the British occupation), Manuel Francisco Tubil (the first Filipino to hold a doctorate in sacred theology and in any field), Balthazar Banta (first Filipino plebeian priest), Juan Carpio (first native president of San Carlos Seminary), Mariano Paras Henson (first Filipino layman who became a doctor of laws);

Juan Severino Mallari (a priest executed for killing 57 people), Asuncion Ventura (established the Asilo de San Vicente de Paul), Anselmo Jorge Fajardo (wrote the longest play in Philippine literature), Joaquin Arnedo Cruz (defined the ilustrado by living it);

Luisa Gonzaga de Leon (first Filipina to author a book), Agapito Conchu (one of the 13 Martyrs of Cavite), Francisco Makabulos (liberated Tarlac and Pangasinan), Servillano Aquino (he started the clan's tradition of patriotism), Maximino Hizon (the greatest Kapampangán revolutionary hero), Jose Alejandrino (helped publish Rizal's El Filibusterismo, acquired arms for the revolution);

Isabelo del Rosario (the captain of the Katipunan who played the violin before his execution by the Americans), Macabebe Scouts (captured Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo for the Americans), Praxedes Fajardo (supported the cause of the Philippine Revolution against Spain), Nicolasa Dayrit (prevented the conflict between Generals Antonio Luna and Tomas Mascardo that would have turned into an all-out war);

Matea Sioco (major financier of the Philippine Revolution), Adriana Hilario (distributed propaganda materials during the revolution), Valentin Ventura (financed the printing of El Filibusterismo), Tiburcio Hilario (refused to testify against Rizal during a trial), Ceferino Joven (organized Bacolor's first theater Compania Sabina that led to the Golden Age of Kapampangan literature);

Macario Arnedo (elevated San Fernando as the regional center by moving the capital there from Bacolor), Braulio Mendoza and Domingo Panlilio (sheltered Filipino revolutionaries), Francisco Liongson (financed Aguinaldo's new republic and was first Kapampangan senator for the third district covering Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija), Mariano Pabalan Byron (wrote the first vernacular *zarzuela*);

Felix Galura (burned the provincial capitol that sparked the revolution in Pampanga), Juan Crisostomo Soto (wrote outstanding works of various literary genres while serving in the revolution), Aurelio Tolentino (one of original members of the Katipunan and first nationalist dramatist), Monico Mercado (an *ilustrado* relative of Rizal who fought in the revolution and wrote lofty works);

Socorro Henson (began the tradition of pulchritude), Honorio Ventura (his philanthropy helped Diosdado Macapagal become President), Pedro Danganan (faith healer in pre-war years), Vicente Alvarez Dizon (pioneered the teaching of art appreciation), Vicente Manansala (redefined Philippine Art), Pablo Angeles David (championed the poor and oppressed);

Jose de Leon (founded Pampanga Sugar Development Co.), Zoilo Galang (put together the first Philippine encyclopedia), Zoilo Hilario (revolutionized Kapampangan orthography), Associate Justice Jose Gutierrez David (one of the framers of the 1935 Constitution), Amado Yuzon (poet laureate), Joaquin Alejandrino (fought the Spaniards and Americans), Vivencio Cuyugan (country's first socialist mayor), Agapito del Rosario (he was executed when he refused to swear allegiance to the Japanese), Pedro Santos (first Kapampangan to become an archbishop), Sotero Baluyut (fast-tracked Pampanga's development by building highways);

Benigno Aquino Sr. (one of the first advocates of Filipinism), Emigdio Cruz (President Quezon's private physician who took on intelligence tasks during the Japanese occupation), Gonzalo Puyat (repairman then manufacturer of billiard tables who became president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce), Renato "Katoks" Tayag (prolific writer of Kapampangan culture and history);

Galo Ocampo (designed the Republic's coat-of-arms and the seals of the President and Vice President), Serafin Quiason (made the country interested in its history), Fernando Ocampo (pioneer in modern architecture), Bob Razon (dean of portraiture in the Philippines), Juan Flores (started Betis' woodcarving industry), Juan and Teresa Nepomuceno (pioneered the electric industry and several more enterprises, founded the first Catholic university run by laypersons but unlike rich families, did not develop a political dynasty);

Mariano A. Henson (started the modern era of Kapampangan studies), Jose Gallardo (the most prolific and influential Kapampangan writer of his generation), Pedro and Jose Abad Santos (represented the farthest opposite ends of the country's political and ideological spectrum, the former being the founder of the Socialist Party of the Philippines and the latter the chief justice of the Supreme Court martyred for defying the Japanese), Luis Taruc (led a massive and sustained campaign for social justice through the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon), Bernabe Buscayno (led the New People's Army that has grown into the most serious armed threat against the government);

Felipa Culala and Elena Poblete (as Dayang-Dayang and Mameng served as Huk commanders), Adelaida Villareyes (did not betray her comrades despite hunger and torture), Malaya Lolas (the unspeakable horrors of war did not break their spirit), Diosdado Macapagal (poor, barefoot lad from Lubao who became fifth President who steered the Philippines to be the most progressive country in Asia next to Japan);

Jose Lingad (fought the Marcos dictatorship), Rogelio de la Rosa (his personal sacrifice, that of withdrawing from the 1961 presidential race, paved the way for a Macapagal victory), Rosa Yumul Ogsimer (first Kapampangan woman to become a poet laureate), Aurea Balagtas (spent her entire life writing), Rosario Baluyut (best Kapampangan woman writer of the 20th century), Rufino Santos (first Filipino and Asian cardinal), Benigno Aquino Jr. (his martyrdom inspired a People Power Revolution).

Tropical Hut
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TUNA SANDWICH MEAL
TUNA & EGG SANDWICH MEAL
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TUNA & CHEESE SANDWICH MEAL
DAING NA BANGUS MEAL
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SARAP Balik-balikan
From February 25 to April 11, 2004.
Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 0512, Series of 2004.

Bolinao river nominated for int'l wetlands award

By Yolanda Fuertes
Bolinao, Pangasinan

FOR protecting and conserving the Balingasay River and the mangrove forests around it, the local government of Bolinao, Pangasinan, has won the Philippine Wetlands Conservation Award and is nominated for the Ramsar Wetland International Award in Uganda next year.

The Ramsar award, established in 1996, is given by the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands signed 30 years ago in Ramsar, Iran.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Protected Area and Wildlife Bureau held the awarding ceremonies for the local winners on Feb. 2 at the PAWB Visitors Area.

The Balingasay River has been adjudged twice as the cleanest river in the Ilocos region by the Gawad Pangulo sa Kapaligiran for inland bodies for water. It is a finalist for the national award this year.

Environmental activist Margaret Celeste said the Bolinao residents and government officials had joined hands so that the Balingasay River, virtually in its pristine ecological state, would remain untouched.

Municipal administrator Fred Castelo said part of Balingasay's mangrove area would have been a part of the quarry area of the aborted multi-million dollar cement plant complex proposed by an international consortium of companies.

The river was also spared from environment-destructive fish pens and fish cages when the local government, at the request of the residents, declared it a marine protected area in 1999.

"An executive order was issued by the local government the following year, granting the barangay council of Balingasay the rights and privileges to promote the conservation, protection and management of the river," Celeste said.

Village voice

The officials of the five villages crossed by the river agreed to enforce measures to protect Balingasay, such as a total ban on cutting of mangroves, regulation on cutting of nipa and bamboos, ban on hunting of birds and other wildlife, and provisions of regular clean-up of the river, especially after flood.

Other organizations in the town also committed themselves to protecting the river, providing labor and resources for all development activities.

The Quibuar Spring, which feeds the scenic Bolinao Falls, and several other tributaries and creeks provide clear water to the 7-km long Balingasay. The spring water meets the seawater of the South China Sea toward the middle of the river, a perfect environment for unique fish and shell species to flourish.

Balingasay is walled on both sides by a thick 15-hectare virgin forest of mangroves and 30 hectares of nipa palms, wild ferns and *balete* trees that protect it from erosion and pollution.

Here, one is treated to sightings of rare wild birds locally known as the *kiaw* and *pagaw*, palls, wild ducks, monkeys, lizards and wild boar that call the forest their home.

Deep down the river, one would find extraordinary sizes of fish, like *malaga, tilapia, lapu-lapu*, crabs, shrimps, *kampis* and oysters. The biggest and oldest oysters are believed found in Balingasay.

The local government, led by Mayor Jesus Celeste, has asked the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, which maintains a marine laboratory in the town, to make studies on the aquatic life in the river.

Nature trip

"But the river offers more than a beautiful nature trip. To the residents, it is a major source of protein and livelihood," Margaret Celeste said.

The mouth is the breeding ground of the *sabalo* (breeder *bangus* or milkfish) whose fry the residents collect.

Catching *bangus* fry is the major livelihood of fisherfolk in the villages traversed by the river—Balingasay, Tupa, Cabuyao, Estanza and Ilog-Manilo. An average of three million fry are caught yearly.

Residents said the river derived its name from a couple, Baling and Asay, who lived near its mouth in the 18th century. But the river's history goes further down the centuries.

Archeological diggings by the National Museum in the 1960s in a private lot some 200 meters from the river's mouth revealed 52 graves.

Excavated were jars containing skeletal remains that were mostly disintegrated, and Ming and Sung jars. Because grave markers carved out of giant oyster shells were also found, archeologists believed that the place was a burial site in the 13th and 14th centuries.

The mouth of the river, which is about 100-meter deep, also served as a repair yard for Chinese junks and, later, the Spanish galleons, historians said.

GMA catches up with FPJ

From page A1

President and the movie actor with former Secretary (Raul) Roco now slipping to third spot behind the two leading candidates," Pulse Asia executive director Ana Maria L. Tabunda said in a statement.

Roco placed third in the February survey with 16.2 percent while Sen. Panfilo Lacson was a distant fourth with 10.7 percent. Preacher Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus Is Lord Movement may have mobilized tens of thousands of supporters at a rally last Sunday but he was a very far fifth, with only 1.2 percent of the votes. Eddie Gil had 0.2 percent.

Roco's January rating, 19.1 percent, was also higher than his score in the February survey but he remained a "distant" third. Lacson got 8.3 percent in January, Villanueva the same 1.2 percent and Gil had 0.3 percent.

Pulse Asia said that a tight race for the presidency among three candidates was noted in most of the election scenarios it tested last November. In that survey, Roco led the pack with 30.6 percent, Ms Macapagal with 27.9 percent and Poe with 27.2 percent.

Vice presidential race

In the vice presidential race, Sen. Noli de Castro, Ms Macapagal's running mate, continues to pull away from Sen. Loren Legarda, Poe's running mate. De Castro was the first choice of 52.9 percent and Legarda of 31.9 percent of the respondents.

The two other lesser known vice presidential candidates, Herminio Aquino, running mate of Roco, had 4 percent while Rodolfo Pajo, running mate of Gil, had 0.1 percent.

There were some 11.2 percent undecided respondents or those who had no choice yet.

Malacañang officials were elated by the survey results.

"We're still going over the survey results but what we can say is this time the President has made headway and this is a stage where the President really has not yet begun to fight," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said at a briefing.

Bunye noted that Ms Macapagal had taken the lead even if she has been campaigning only three days a week.

Unbelievable

Poe's camp described the results of the survey as "unbelievable."

Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Poe's personal campaign manager, said that some quarters were apparently trying to "condition" the people into believing that the presidential race would eventually be won by the President.

"I won't be surprised if Pulse Asia and SWS have been penetrated by manipulators because this is the most unbelievable survey result I have heard," Sotto said in a phone interview.

The senator said that based on his "pulse" of the people, if one asks them who they would vote for among the presidential candidates, Ms Macapagal would not be on top of their list.

Sotto said it is Roco who would come second to Poe in the ratings game, and not Ms Macapagal.

Too fast

Roco questioned the speed by which the latest Pulse Asia survey results were released to the media yesterday.

He said that if the survey was conducted from Feb. 16 to 20, it was impossible to tabulate and analyze the survey in just three days.

"I have commissioned surveys in the past, but the fastest took 10 days. So this one is too fast," said Roco, who appeared unperturbed by the results of the survey.

Roco said it was too early to make heads or tails of surveys on presidential candidates. What was "clear is there is confusion and the debate should clarify this," he said.

"*Tuloy lang kami* (We go on). We're the flower people. But we don't expect to walk in the rose garden," Roco added.

He said that his ratings would bounce back after the presidential debate to be conducted by the INQUIRER and GMA 7 next month.

"The sooner the debate clarifies the candidates and their platform and positions, the better for public welfare. It's a question of proceeding from confusion to enlightenment (because) the debate should enlighten (the electorate)," Roco said.

He said he could not still give a "scientific" assessment of the survey since he had yet to study its results.

Actual voting

Pulse Asia said that in the first survey, conducted from Jan. 23 to Feb. 8, the respondents were asked whom they would vote for among six official presidential candidates.

The second survey, from Feb. 16 to Feb. 20, asked the respondents to write down on a ballot the names of their chosen candidates as if to simulate the actual voting.

Pulse Asia said the findings of both surveys were nearly the same. It said the second survey showed that virtually the same proportion of voters would choose either Ms Macapagal (31.9 percent) or Poe (31.7 percent) if elections were held today.

Poe leads 1st survey

But in the first survey, Poe was actually in the lead with 34.6 percent while Ms Macapagal had 33.4 percent. Pulse Asia did not explain if the controversy over Poe's citizenship affected his showing in the second survey.

Pulse Asia said that between the two survey periods, electoral support for Ms Macapagal dropped markedly (-3 to -4 percentage points) in Northern and Central Luzon, in the Visayas and in the most numerous Class D. Her rating went up significantly in Class ABC (+6 percentage points).

Pulse said there were "significant erosions" in electoral support for Poe in all geographic areas and economic classes (-2 to -7 percentage points) except in Northern and Central Luzon where voter preference for the actor went up from 35 to 38 percent between January and February.

ABC class

In the second survey, Ms Macapagal had 33.3 percent of the ABC Class compared with Poe's 22.5 percent. She had 32.9 percent of the D class while Poe had 29.9 percent. But in the poorest Class E, Poe had 39.3 percent and Ms Macapagal, 28.7 percent.

Ms Macapagal was favored in Mindanao, getting 37.8 percent compared with Poe's 31 percent. In Western and Eastern Visayas, Ms Macapagal had the edge with 42.7 and 47 percent, respectively while Poe was a distant second with 20.4 percent and 24.4 percent, respectively.

Luzon is heavily in favor of Poe. He had 38 percent in Northern/Central Luzon and 34 percent in Southern Luzon, while Ms Macapagal scored 28.1 percent and 23.6 percent, respectively.

In vote-rich Metro Manila, Poe was leading with 31. 8 percent with Ms Macapagal placing second with 22.3 percent. Roco had 18 percent and Lacson, 14.8 percent.

Significant decline

Pulse Asia said De Castro enjoyed a wide lead over Legarda despite a "significant decline" in his overall voter preference between January and February (62 percent and 53 percent, respectively). During the period, the polling firm said electoral support for Legarda remained constant at 32 percent.

The polling firm said voter preference for De Castro dropped in all geographic areas and economic groupings (-5 to -13 percentage points) while that of Legarda declined in the Visayas and in Class ABC (-2 to -10 percentage points).

Pulse Asia said De Castro led Legarda in all geographic areas and economic classes in January 2004 but she posted a 7- percentage point lead the next month.

High level of indecision

The respondents were asked if there was the possibility that they would still change their vote between now and the May 10 elections. Some 42 percent of the respondents said the possibility was small/very small/none; 35 percent were undecided.

Pulse Asia said this showed a high level of indecision in the Filipinos' first-choice of presidential candidate.

'Pipay embodied American dream'

From page A1

had always known, face challenges, hurdle obstacles, do whatever it takes to make your dreams come true."

Ten months after Cruz mysteriously disappeared, her remains were found last Wednesday entombed in a slab floor at the home of Dean Faiello, a medical impostor who had treated the 35-year-old financial analyst for a growth on her tongue. Cruz was identified through her breast implants.

Detectives were investigating whether Cruz died after seeing Faiello for a treatment last April when she disappeared.

Faiello, 44, remains a fugitive. He was arrested in 2002 for practicing without a license and illegally possessing medical drugs. He apparently continued to see patients at an apartment, authorities said. He pleaded guilty in June 2003 but fled to Costa Rica before sentencing, authorities said.

Lara told mourners that her loving, loyal sister—nicknamed "Pipay" by her family—may have been naive and too quick to trust strangers.

"I guess because honesty was second nature to you, you expected the same from others," Lara said. "But, my dear sister, I think you expected too much, because not everybody you trusted were trustworthy after all."

Unbearable mystery

Relatives said the discovery of Cruz's remains was a heartbreaking end to an unbearable 10-month mystery. Many family members had traveled back and forth from the Philippines to search for her in New York City.

"Of course it's not a good relief, but it's a relief that she was found," said Lettie Tiangco, a sister-in-law of Cruz's uncle. "Now everybody is going to have peace, because we know what happened to her."

PIPAY Cruz

After graduating at the top of her class at Maryknoll College in Quezon City, Cruz moved to the United States in 1992 to work in Houston, Texas. She earned her MBA degree in finance at Fordham University in 1998 and became a US citizen four years later.

Worked her way up

From a low-level position at Citibank, she worked her way up to become a financial analyst at Barclay Capital asset management group, earning as much as $180,000 per year.

But she eschewed material possessions, preferring to live simply, share her wealth and give to charity, loved ones said.

Friends and family praised Cruz's work ethic, dedication and spirituality. Emilio Ozaeta, a cousin, said Cruz had wanted to someday share these values with children of her own.

"She was a very caring and loving person," Ozaeta said.

Emotional rites

The Bukas Palad choir sang "Hindi Kita Malilimutan" during the emotion-filled service attended by about 70 people, including Cruz's parents.

"It was a terrible and senseless killing ... I hope justice is served," said Cecilia Rebong, the Philippine consul general in New York.

Lara said her sister's death had brought her family closer. "Pipay was a very special person. She left a legacy that nothing in this world is more important than to treasure one's family," she said. ***Reports from AP and Rita Villadiego, PDI correspondent***

APACS 4th World Congress on Cosmetic and Dermatologic Surgery
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PROGRAM

DAY 1 AM
26 February Thursday
07.00 - 05.00 REGISTRATION
Venue: Lower Lobby Foyer
08 30 - 09 00 OPENING CEREMONIES Isla 1&2
Opening of Exhibits Venue: Isla 3
Invocation
National Anthem
Welcome Remarks
LIPOSUCTION PLENARY SESSION
Chairman: MANUEL O. FERNANDEZ, JR., M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: ISLA 1& 2 09 00 am - 12 20 pm
09.00 - 09.30 PLENARY LECTURE 1
Proportion Divine in Cosmetic Surgery
Liposculpture in Small Volumes
Julio Ferreira, M.D., (Argentina)
09:30 - 09:50 PLENARY LECTURE 2
Combined Procedures for Facial Contouring
Tetsuo Shu, MD (Japan)
09:50 - 10:10 PLENARY LECTURE 3
Liposuction Where We Were in 1984 & Where We are Today
George Engel, M.D. (U.S.A.)
10:10 - 10:20 The Safety of Office-Based (Suction-Assisted) Lipoplasty
Josef S. Goldbaum, M.D. (Australia)
10:20 - 10:30 The Safety of Megaliposuction
Robert Peter Aloygan, M.D. (Philippines)
10:30 - 10:40 Syndrome-X (Pre-Diabetes) in Liposuction Patients
Jerry Schwartz, MD (Australia)
10:40 - 10:50 LipoSat-Best Results for the Patient-More Comfort to the Surgeon
Clara Santos, M.D. (Brazil)
10:50 - 11:00 Standing Liposculpture-Refinements in Body Liposuction
Marco Faria-Correa, M.D. (Brazil)
11:00 - 11:10 Vibroassisted Liposculpture
Pier Antonio Bacci, M.D. (Italy)
11:10 - 11:20 Vibroliposuction - Personal Experience of more than 6.000 Cases
Angelo Rebelo, M.D. (Portugal)
11:20 - 11:30 Liposculpture in Dorsal Area and Arms
Julio Ferreira, M.D. (Argentina)
11:30 - 11:40 Liposuction of Arms Using One Opening
Edwin Djuanda, M.D. (Indonesia)
11:40 - 11:50 Post-Liposuction Management
Rosario Ballecer, M.D. (Philippines)
11:50 - 12:00 Complications in Liposculpture: Prevention and Treatment
Julio Ferreira, M.D. (Argentina)
12:00 – 12:10 Clinical Application of Autologous Fat Transplantation
Tetsuo Shu, M.D. (Japan)
12:10 - 12:20 OPEN FORUM
12:20 - 1:20 LUNCH BREAK/EXHIBITS VIEWING

DAY 1 PM
26 February Thursday BLEPHAROPLASTY SESSION
Chairperson: CYVEL GLENN TAN, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: ISLA 2 01 20 - 03 10 pm
01:20 - 01:40 Trans-racial Surgery for Orientals to Mimic Caucasian Look
Keizo Fukuta, M.D.(Japan)
01:40 - 01:50 Instructional Film on Performance of Blepharoplasty
Jerry Schwartz, M.D. (Australia)
01:50 - 02:00 The Magic Blepharoplasty at Bangmohd Hospital
Surasi Assadamongkol, M.D. (Thailand)
02:00 - 02.10 Upper Blepharoplasty Skin-Levator Aponeurosis Skin Suture Technique
Narciso R. Adraneda, Jr., M.D. (Philippines)
02:10 - 02:20 Double Eyelid Operation by Single-Loop Buried Suture Method
Tsutomu Mizuno, M.D. (Japan)
02:20 - 02:30 Aponeurotic Ptosis: What Lies Beneath?
Masaki Koizumi, M.D. (Japan)
02:30 - 02:40 Lower Blepharoplasty: The Role of Orbicularis Muscle Suspension
Keizo Fukuta, M.D (Japan)
02:40 - 02:50 Correction of Post-Blepharoplasty Lid Retraction
Angeles Morales-De Leon, M.D. (Philippines)
02:50 - 03:00 Siliconomas of the Eyelids
Fatima Regala, M.D. (Philippines)
03:00 - 03:10 OPEN FORUM
03 10 - 03 20 COFFEE BREAK
EXHBITS VIEWING THERAPEUTICS AND INNOVATIONS IN DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY 1
Chairperson: MA. LOURDES UYEHARA, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: ISLA 1 01 20 - 03.10 pm
01:20 - 01:30 Depigmenting Agents on Asian Skin
Evangeline B. Handog,(Philippines) M.D.
01:30 - 01:40 Skin Absorbable Vitamin C Lotion for \ Deep Burns
Tetsuo Shu, M.D. (Japan)
01:40 - 01:50 Oral Tamoxifen: Potential Therapeutic Regimen in Treating Hypertrophic Excessive Dermal Scarring
Seyed Reza Mousavi, M.D. (Iran)
01:50 - 02:00 Progressive Skin Peeling Using 20% TCA
Corazon Collantes-Jose, M.D. (Philippines)
02:00 - 02:10 Almond Peel in Dyschromies, Acne and Cutaneous Aging
Julio Ferreira, M.D. (Argentina)
02:10 - 02:20 Exoderm by Yoram Finisi - Best, Easiest and Safest Deep Peel
Clara Santos, M.D. (Brazil)
02:20 - 02:30 The Versatile Golden Peel: When Less is More
Enrique Hernandez-Perez, M.D (San Salvador)
02:30 - 02:40 Medium Peel + Toxin Botulin + Polimetil Metacrilate
Clara Santos, M.D. (Brazil)
02:40 - 02:50 Complications after Superficial and Medium Depth Peels"
Daniela Taher, MD (Lebanon)
02:50 - 03:00 Dermabrasion
Amor Josefina Rivera, M.D. (Philippines)
03:00 - 03:10 OPEN FORUM
03 10 - 03:20 COFFEE BREAK/EXHBITS VIEWING
DAY 1 PM
26 February Thursday
ANCILLARY PROCEDURES SESSION
Chairperson: JAIME P. CAPCO, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: ISLA 2 03 20 - 04 40 pm
03:20 - 03:30 Office Anesthesia for Cosmetic Surgeons
Juan Sanchez, M.D. (Philippines)
03:30 - 03:40 The Latest Technique in Creating Dimple
Nguyen Xuan Ai, M.D. (USA)
03:40 - 03:50 Stripless Hair Transplantation: No-Scalpel, No-Suture Technique
Carl Bazan, M.D. (Mexico)
03:50 - 04:00 Complication and Surgical Treatment of Silicon Injection at the Face
Dewo Aksoro Alfandi, M.D. (Indonesia)
04:00 - 04:10 Chin Augmentation Using Suture
Nikolay Serdev, M.D., PhD (Bulgaria)
04:10 - 04:20 Management of Local Suppurative Complications Following High Ear Piercing
Victor Noronha, M.D. (HongKong)
04:20 - 04:30 Sex Reassignment Surgery
Jimmy Jorge, M.D. (Philippines)
04 30 - 04:40 OPEN FORUM
THERAPEUTICS AND INNOVATIONS IN DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY 2
Chairperson: CRISTINA PUYAT, MD. (Philippines)
Venue: ISLA 1 03 30 - 05 00 pm
03.30 - 03.40 A Novel Treatment for Dermal Defects and Wrinkles
Seyed Reza Mousavi, M.D. (Iran)
03:40 - 03:50 Update in Stretch Marks
Julio Ferreira, M.D (Argentina)
03:50 - 04:00 Nail Surgery/Radiosurgery
Restituto Acosta, M.D.(Philippines)
04:00 - 04:10 Management of Keloids
Mary Jean Aquino, M.D. (Philippines)
04:10 - 04:20 Melanocyte Procedures In Vitiligo
Somesh Gupta, M.D. (India)
04:20 - 04:30 Clinical Observation on Treatment of Vitiligo with a 308 nm Xenon-Chloride Eximer Laser
Ji-Ho Rhue, MD (Korea)
04:30 - 04:40 New Melasma Treatment: Cosmelan®
Ka-Youn Chang, MD (Korea)
04:40 - 04:50 Facial Tightening Using Non-Invasive Radiofrequency (ThermaCool TC System): Initial Experiences in Korean Patients
Dong-Hye Suh, MD (Korea)
04:50 - .05:00 OPEN FORUM
07 00 - 10 00 WELCOME RECEPTION/FELLOWSHIP NIGHT
DAY 2 AM
27 February Friday
08 00 - 05.00 REGISTRATION
Venue: Lower Lobby Foyer
DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY PLENARY SESSION
Chairperson: AGNES ESPINOZA-THAEBTHARM, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 1&2 09 00 am - 12 00 nn
09.00 - 09.20 PLENARY LECTURE 4
New Laser/Light Sources for Acne
MICHAEL GOLD, M.D. (USA)
09:20 - 09:40 PLENARY LECTURE 5
Intense Pulsed Light for Different Therapeutic Applications
ENRIQUE HERNANDEZ-PEREZ, M.D. (San Salvador)
09:40 - 09:50 COFFEE BREAK/EXHIBITS VIEWING
09.50 - 10.00 Botulinum Toxin Basic and Advanced Technology
Martin Kassir, M.D. (U.S.A.)
10:00 - 10:10 Dermal Augmentation Materials
Martin Kassir, M.D. (U.S.A.)
10:10 - 10:20 New-Fill
Edwards, Timothy M.D. (Australia)
10:20 - 10:30 Aptos Threads
Manuel O. Fernandez, Jr., M.D. (Philippines)
10:30 - 10:40 Photorejuvenation by Intense Pulse Light
Raul Guanzon, M.D. (Philippines)
10:40 - 10:50 Dermoelectroporation: A New Frontier for Antiageing Therapy
Pier Antonio Bacci, M.D. (Italy)
10:50 - 11:00 Management of Acne Scars
Miriam Emily Soriano, M.D. (Philippines)
11:00 - 11:10 Acne Scar Reduction Surgery: New Approach
Corazon Collantes-Jose, M.D. (Philippines)
11:10 - 11:20 Microdermabrasion: A Basic Review
Martin Kassir, M.D. (U.S.A.)
11:20 - 11:30 Non-Ablative Resurfacing: Technologies and Uses
Martin Kassir, M.D. (U.S.A.)
11:30 - 11:40 CO2 Laser Resurfacing Philippine Experience
Monina A. Macam, M.D. (Philippines)
11:40 - 11:50 Skin Needling - Alternative to Laser Resurfacing for Percutaneous Collagen Induction
Des Fernandes, M.D. (South Africa)
11:50 - 12:00 OPEN FORUM
12:00 - 01.00 LUNCH/EXHIBITS VIEWING
DAY 2 PM
27 February Friday
RHINOPLASTY SESSION
Chairman: JAIME ARZADON, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 2 01 00 - 03 10 pm
01:00 - 01:20 Asian Nasal Tip
Dong Hak-Jung, M.D. (Korea)
01:20 - 01:40 Functional Rhinoplasty: Aims and Goals
S. Kaluskar, M.D. (USA)
01:40 - 01:50 Surgery of the Deformed Nose
S. Kaluskar, M.D. (USA)
01:50 - 02:00 Simultaneous Open Rhinoplasty and Alar Base Excision
Sameer Ali Balageeh, M.D. (Saudi Arabia)
02:00 - 02:10 Rhinoplasty with Different Implants for Tip Plasty
Weimin Yin, M.D. (China)
02:10 - 02:20 Mistakes Made in Doing the Oriental Nose
Andrew Charles Gomez, M.D. (Malaysia)
02:20 - 02:30 Rhinoplasty-Correction of Nasal Length Deformities & Alar Base Trimming
Mariano R. Agcaoili, Jr., M.D. (Philippines)
02:30 - 02:40 Use of Aquamid Filler for Nose Correction
Andrew Le, M.D. (Australia)
02:40 - 02:50 Clinical Indications for Use of Aquamid in the Face
Joseph Tiong, M.D. (Australia)
02.50 - 03:00 Midfacial Contouring Using Submalar Implants
Parry de la Cruz, M.D. (Philippines)
03:00 - 03:10 OPEN FORUM
03 10 - 03 20 COFFEE BREAK/EXHIBITS VIEWING
LASERS AND LIGHT SOURCES
Chairperson: ESTHER C. LEYNES, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 1 01.00 - 03 10 pm
01:00 - 01:10 ALA-PDT in Dermatology-What's New in Cosmetic Dermatology
Michael Gold, M.D. (USA)
01:10 - 01:20 Lasers in Cosmetic Surgery: Possibilities and Complications
Gansel W. Reinhard, M.D. (Germany)
01:20 - 01:30 Q-Switched Nd YAG Laser in Non-Ablative Laser Resurfacing
David Sudarto Oeiria, M.D. (Indonesia)
01:30 - 01:40 Photo Rejuvenation and Pigmentation: Treatment with IPL using new Photorejuvenation Application MAPS in Asian Skin
David Sudarto Oeiria, M.D. (Indonesia)
01:40 - 01:50 Light & Heat Energy Treatment of Acne in the Philippines
Esther C. Leynes, M.D. (Philippines)
01:50 - 02:00 Laser Treatment for Refractory Acne Vulgaris
Somyos Kunachak, M.D. (Thailand)
02:00 - 02:10 Lasers and Intense Pulse Light for Hair Removal
Michael Gold, M.D. (USA)
02:10 - 02:20 Comparison of 4 and 40 Milliseconds Pulse Durations for Nd-YAG Hair Removal Laser
Shahid Javahid Akhtar, M.D. (Pakistan)
02:20 - 02:30 Light and Heat Treatments for Hair Removal
Jonathan Dizon, M.D. (Philippines)
02:30 - 02:40 Laser Treatment of Pigmented Lesions
Elsie P. Floreza, M.D. (Philippines)
02:40 - 02:50 New Lasers for Psoriasis, Vitiligo and Repigmentation
Michael Gold, M.D. (U.S.A.)
02:50 - 03:00 Need of Anti-Virals with Laser Resurfacing
Jerry Schwartz, M.D. (Australia)
03:00 - 03:10 OPEN FORUM
3 10 - 03 20 COFFEE BREAK/EXHIBITS VIEWING
DAY 2 PM
27 February Friday
BREASTS & BODY SURGERY SESSION
Chairman: DICK NAVOA, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 2 03 20 - 05 20 pm
03.20 - 03:30 Techniques of Breast Augmentation Procedures
Tetsuo Shu, M.D. (Japan)
03:30 - 03:40 Autologous Fat Transplantation for Breast Augmentation
Tetsuo Shu, M.D (Japan)
03:40 - 03:50 My Experience in Breast Augmentation: A Comparison of Result of Saline Implant and Silicone-Gel Implant
Nguyen Xuan Cuong, M.,D. (Vietnam)
03:50 - 04:00 Breast Augmentation
Angelo Rebelo, M.D. (Portugal)
04:00 - 04:10 Rebelo's Breast Reduction Areolo-Vertical Under Tumescent Local Anesthesia
Angelo Rebelo, M.D. (Portugal)
04:10 - 04:20 Suction-Assisted Lipoplasty of the Male Breast
Josef S. Goldbaum, M.D. (Australia)
04:20 - 04:30 Endoscopic Mammoplasty-Reduction and Lift
Marco Faria-Correa, M.D. (Brazil)
04:30 - 04:40 Endoscopic Abdominoplasty
Marco Faria-Correa, M.D. (Brazil)
04:40 - 04:50 Endoscopic Buttocks Augmentation
Marco Faria-Correa, M.D. (Brazil)
04:50 - 05:00 Serdev Suture" for Scalless Buttocks Lift
Nikolay Serdev, M.D., PhD (Bulgaria)
05:00 - 05:10 The Complications of Abdominoplasty
Pier Antonio Bacci, M.D. (Italy)
05 10 - 05:20 OPEN FORUM
PHLEBOLOGY SESSION & ANCILLARY PROCEDURES SESSION
Chairperson: MIRIAM EMILY SORIANO, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 1 03 20 - 05 20 pm
03.20 - 03.30 Legal Aspects of Cosmetic Surgery
Tony Rebosa, M.D. (Philippines)
03:30 - 03:40 Psychiatric Evaluation of the Cosmetic Surgical Patient
Ed Tolentino, M.D. (Philippines)
03:40 - 03:50 Clinical and Laboratory Diagnosis of Chronic Venous Insufficiency
Maria Theresa B. Abola, MD (Philippines)
03:50 - 04:00 Compression Hosiery, Prevention & Treatment of Varicose and Telangiectatic Veins
Ma. Encarnacion Legaspi, M.D. (Philippines)
04:00 - 04:10 Sclerotherapy
Miriam Emily P. Soriano, M.D. (Philippines)
04:10 - 04:20 Sclerotherapy of Glomangioma: A Case Report and Review of Literature
Carren Hau, M.D. (Philippines)
04:20 - 04:30 Ambulatory Phlebectomy
Teresita S. Ferrariz, M.D. (Philippines)
04:30 - 04:40 Surgical Options for Treatment of Varicose Veins
Vic Gisbert, M.D. (Philippines)
04:40 - 04:50 Treatment for Axillary Hyperhidrosis
Suzette C. Castañeda, M.D. (Philippines)
04:50 - 05:00 Botox/Dysport for Hyperhidrosis: A Case of Temporary Shoulder Weakness
Sr. Wendy Morel (Australia)
05:00 - 05:10 OPEN FORUM
DAY 3 AM
28 FEBRUARY SATURDAY
COSMETIC SURGERY PLENARY SESSION
Chairperson: ROSARIO BALLECER, M.D. (Philippines)
Venue: Isla 1&2 09 00 am - 12 20 pm
09:00 - 09:20 PLENARY LECTURE 6
New Approach to Facial Rejuvenation
ANTHONY ERIAN, M.D. (U.K.)
09:20 - 09:40 PLENARY LECTURE 7
Minimally Invasive Rejuvenation Surgery: Facelift Without Incision
KATSUYA TAKASU, M.D. (Japan)
09:40 - 09:50 COFFEE BREAK/EXHIBITS VIEWING
09.50 - 10:00 The First Surgical Facial Anatomy Dissection Course in South East Asia
Tanom Bunaprasert, M.D. (Thailand)
10:00 - 10:10 Surgical Treatment of the Aging Face
Kaneo Takahashi, M.D. (Japan)
10:10 - 10:20 Forehead Rejuvenation for Japanese
Keizo Fukuta, M.D. (Japan)
10:20 - 10:40 Virtually Scarless Face & Neck Lift for the Younger Patient
Des Fernandes, M.D. (South Africa)
10:40 - 10:50 Eyebrow Lift With Virtual Invisible Scars
Des Fernandes, M.D (South Africa)
10:50 - 11:00 Scarless Browlift Using Special Suture
Nikolay Serdev, M.D., PhD (Bulgaria)
11:00 - 11:10 Temporal, Low and Total SMAS Lift
Nikolay Serdev, M.D., PhD (Bulgaria)
11:10 - 11:20 Modifications in the Technique of S-Lift
Enrique Hernandez-Perez, M.D. (San Salvador)
11:20 - 11:30 Percutaneous Approach to Eyebrow Lift: The Salvadorean Option
Enrique Hernandez-Perez, M.D (San Salvador)
11:30 - 11:40 Delta Lift. A subperiosteal Permanent Browlift
Carl Bazan, M.D. (Mexico)
11:40 - 11:50 The Evolution of the S-Lift
Longin H. Zurek, M.D. (Australia)
11:50 - 12:00 Liposuction Assisted Facelift
Nguyen Xuan Ai, M.D.(USA)
12:00 - 12:10 Facelift Complications
Manuel O. Fernandez, Jr., M.D. (Philippines)
12:10 - 12:20 OPEN FORUM
12:20 - 1:20 LUNCH
01 30 - 06:00 CITY TOUR
DAY 4
29 February Sunday
08 00 am - 05 00 pm LIVE SURGICAL DEMONSTRATIONS
VENUE: De Los Santos Medical Center, E. Rodriguez, Sr., Q.C.
I. LIPOSUCTION
A. Soft Face Lifting & Lipofilling • B. Vibroassisted Liposculpture C. Vibro Liposuction • D. Liposuction with Fat Transplant Breast E. Liposculpture in Different Areas of the Body • F. Syringe Liposuction with External Ultrasound Assisted • G. Liposuction Traditional • H. Liposuction Ultrasonic • I. Gluteal Liposuction and Bottom Fat Graft • J. Liposuction of the Arms
II. ENDOSCOPIC SURGERY
A. Endoscopic Abdominoplasty • B. Endoscopic Neck Lift C. Endoscopic Buttock Lift
III. FACE
A. Rhytidectomy (Facelift) • B. Short Access Facial Elevation C. Percutaneous Approach to Eyebrow Lift • D. Delta-lift, a Modified and Fast Eyebrow Temporal Lift • E. Aptos Threads Improvements F. Face Lift without Incision
IV. EYE BLEPHAROPLASTY
A. Blepharoplasty with External Mini-Incisions – Lower Lid B. Management of Ectropion • C. Simplified Skin-Levator Aponeurosis, Skin Suture Technique Blepharoplasty • D. Double Eyelid Operations: Waikiki Technique / Vietnam Technique
V. RHINOPLASTY
A. Correction of Crooked Nose by: Dr. S. Kaluskar - USA
B. Functional Septo-reconstruction by: Dr. S. Kaluskar – USA
C. Rhinoplasty Augmentation with Alar Base Trimming Using Silicon Implants by: Dr. Nguyen Xunar Cuong – Vietnam, Dr. Mariano Agcaoili – Philippines, Dr. Patrick De Leon – Philippines, Using Gortex and Asian Nasal Tip Surgery by: Dr. Dong Hak-Jung – Korea
VI. BREAST SURGERY
A. Breast Augmentation Tumescent Technique • B. Breast Reduction Areolo-Vertical Cheek Enhancement – Submalar Augmentation / Dimples Creation • Hair – Stripless Hair Transplantation: No-Scalpel, No-Suture Technique • Scar Revisions – Latest Technology • Chin – Use of Implant / Bunching Technique / Cleft Chin • Lips – Heart Shape Lips
Skin – Simplified Acne Reduction Technique and Neovascularization / Management of Stretch Marks Peelings: Superficial and Deep Peelings / Golden Peel / Progressive Skin Peel/ Medium Peel & Botox • Fillers – Botox / Perlane / Restylane / Aquamid / New Fill Light Sources and Lasers – to be demonstrated

(Transportation to be provided to participants)

Edsa I is 18; spark gone but meaning endures

From page A1

You instead help her deal with the problems and survive."

Ms Macapagal will also sign into law a measure declaring Aug. 21 Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. Day, in commemoration of the ex-senator whose assassination on that day in 1983 served to rally the Filipinos against the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

Afterward, she will proceed to La Salle Greenhills to encourage youth volunteers to help ensure clean elections on May 10.

A Mass is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. at the Edsa Shrine. It will be celebrated by Jaime Cardinal Sin, the Manila archbishop whose clarion call brought an estimated one million people to Edsa in 1986.

Cynical eye

But the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the party-list group Bayan Muna are casting a cynical eye on the anniversary activities and will use the occasion to warn the Macapagal administration against committing massive fraud in the May 10 elections.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the party will mark the 18th anniversary of Edsa I with a "People's Caravan" covering major areas in Metro Manila, to symbolize the people's desire for free, honest and orderly elections.

Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes said his group will concentrate its forces outside Camp Aguinaldo and would "try to make a symbolic pass" at the Edsa Shrine, a stand-off point for protesters and anti-riot police in past anniversary celebrations.

He said some 3,000 Bayan marchers will assemble at the MRT station in Cubao, Quezon City, at around 9:30 a.m. and proceed to the camp's gate on Edsa.

Reyes said Bayan had invited to the march-rally Council on Philippine Affairs secretary general Pastor "Boy" Saycon and the families of the military officers calling themselves "Kawal Pilipino."

Saycon and eight others, including five Kawal officers, are facing sedition charges before the justice department.

The charges are a result of their holding a press conference on Jan. 28 in which the five Kawal officers, their faces hidden behind two Philippine flags sewn together, read out a statement saying Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita had ordered them to spy on and restrict the movements of Ms Macapagal's rivals in the presidential race.

Marcos-style repression

Ocampo said that amid the Edsa I hoopla, "Marcos-style political repression" remained a reality under the Macapagal administration.

A political prisoner during the Marcos regime, Ocampo raised the unsolved murders of Bayan Muna members and sympathizers, particularly in Mindoro. The latest of the murders were those of Juvy Magsino, human rights lawyer and vice mayor of Naujan, Mindoro Oriental, and rights advocate Leima Fortu, on Feb. 13.

"The killing of Magsino, a mayoralty candidate who was a sure winner in the coming polls, indicates that the military is actively meddling in the province's local elections," Ocampo said at a press conference.

"After 18 years, the shroud of despotism and military rule has not been lifted," he said, and assailed the Macapagal administration for its failure to ensure passage, under the 12th Congress, of the law allocating financial compensation for Marcos' victims of rights abuse.

Reyes said the killings of Magsino and Fortu, which Bayan Muna and its allied groups had accused the Army's 204th Infantry Battalion of masterminding, were an early hint of how the military could be used "to create an atmosphere of fear that makes electoral fraud possible."

"This is especially true in the provinces, where the military almost surely determines the outcome of the elections," he added.

Ocampo called on the President to take decisive action on demands to pull out the 204th IB from Mindoro Oriental.

"This is the only way the people of Mindoro can be assured of fair and peaceful elections on May 10," he said.

Heightened alert

Even if the annual Edsa ceremony appears to have lost its spark, the Philippine National Police is leaving nothing to chance.

Its Metro Manila force has been on heightened alert since yesterday. According to Senior Supt. Joel Goltiao, PNP information officer, at least 13,000 of the 17,000-strong National Capital Region Police Office will be on hand to secure the Edsa Shrine, People Power Monument and the other venues for commemorative activities.

Goltiao said hundreds of officers will be deployed to control traffic and block protesters from the Edsa Shrine, which the Catholic Church had declared off-limits to any political activity.

"We want to deprive groups out to sow terror and chaos the opportunity to attack," said Director Ricardo de Leon, NCRPO chief. "[We] will not allow criminal and terrorist groups to take advantage of the event."

The Western Police District will deploy a contingent to secure the Chino Roces Bridge on Mendiola and the Baseco compound in Tondo, where Ms Macapagal and ex-Presidents Aquino and Ramos will help build houses for the poor as part of the Gawad Kalinga program.

Ms Macapagal will attend a similar activity at Smokey Mountain in Manila. Like Baseco, Smokey Mountain is a known bailiwick of her ousted predecessor Joseph Estrada.

Inspiration

In Baguio City, young writers documenting the youth's participation in Edsa II said the 1986 uprising was their inspiration to clamor for change.

"The youth of Edsa II appreciate the role of the people in Edsa I. Although we were very young at that time, it inspired us to use our strength in ousting a corrupt president [in 2001]," said Rhonalyn Olea, president of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines.

Olea is an editor of the forthcoming book titled "People Power II: Through the Eyes of the Young," which compiles at least 30 essays and poems on one of the most important events that shaped Philippine history.

The contributors were between 13 and 30 years old between 1999 and 2001, and took part in the protest actions that led to Estrada's ouster.

Raymond Palatino, another editor of the book, said they were disappointed with some Edsa II personalities now embroiled in political conflicts.

"[But] there is still hope," he said. [Edsa II] taught us that even the most popular President can be booted out of power when the people unite." *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana in Manila; Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Day Four, Feb. 25, 1986

From page A1

8 a.m.: People are called to guard Club Filipino in San Juan in case Marcos attempts to disrupt Aquino's inauguration as President.

10:15 a.m.: Aquino arrives at Club Filipino. Opposition lawyer Neptali Gonzales reads resolution proclaiming her and former Sen. Salvador Laurel as duly elected President and Vice President, respectively.

10:46 a.m.: Aquino is sworn into office by Senior Justice Claudio Teehankee. Assembled crowd breaks into protest song "Bayan Ko." AFP Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos and Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile join singing with hands raised in Laban "L" sign.

11:45 a.m.: Marcos enters Malacañang's Ceremonial Hall for his inauguration.

11:55 a.m.: As Marcos raises his hand to take his oath, live coverage is abruptly ended with perfect shot fired at transmitter simultaneously shutting down Channels 2, 9 and 13.

Chief Justice Ramon Aquino is called back for reenactment of swearing-in before movie cameras.

Marcoses proceed to balcony and wave at some 2,500 people assembled below. Crowd cheers: "Martial law! Martial law!"

3:45 p.m.: Loyalist soldiers try to ram through barricades set up at Tomas Morato/Timog junction in Quezon City, but "people power" prevails. On Nagtahan, pro-Aquino groups and loyalists coming from Marcos' inauguration clash.

4:30 p.m.: Imee Marcos' husband Tommy Manotoc relays offer of US Brig. Gen. Ted Allen to use American helicopters or boats to move Marcos from Palace.

5 p.m.: Marcos calls Enrile again to coordinate his departure from Malacañang. His aides start packing not only clothes and books but also boxes of money stored in his bedroom since start of election campaign.

Prime Minister Cesar Virata negotiates Marcos' departure with Aquino.

6:30 p.m.: Imee and Irene Marcos plead with their father to leave Malacañang after he tells his remaining men that he has decided to die there.

7 p.m.: US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth asks Aquino if Marcos can be allowed two days in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, before heading abroad. To prevent possible regrouping of Marcos loyalists, Aquino refuses.

In Malacañang, pieces of luggage are loaded on boats, which proceed to Pangarap golf course where US helicopters are to collect Marcoses.

7:30 p.m.: Families of Ver and Eduardo Cojuangco motor to Clark Air Base in Pampanga.

8:40 p.m.: Convoy of heavily secured vehicles make beeline for Clark.

8:45 p.m.: Marcoses and other government officials board helicopters, some of their possessions loaded along with them.

9:05 p.m.: First of helicopters leaves Palace grounds.

Shortly, crowd near Malacañang rejoices over reports that Marcoses had left.

9:45 p.m.: Marcos lands in Clark and is met by Bosworth. People in the area mark his arrival with chants of "Cory! Cory!"

9:52 p.m.: Radio dzRH announces: "The Marcoses have fled the country."

10 p.m.: US Air Force TV station FEN confirms Marcos' departure.

11:30 p.m.: People wrench Palace gates open. Marcos loyalists inside Malacañang escape in all directions, with members of Palace household and security men jumping into murky Pasig River to flee angry crowd.

Looters and vandals enter Malacañang. Ramos' men move in to secure premises.

Officials who withdrew support from Marcos: Brig. Gen. Felix Brawner of elite First Scout Ranger Brigade; Brig. Gen. Carlos Martel, Special Mission Wing of Air Force.

Sources: "Chronology of a Revolution" by Angela Stuart Santiago, "Walang Himala: Himagsikan sa Edsa" by Angela Stuart Santiago, "The Quartet Tiger Moon" by Quijano de Manila, "People Power: The Philippine Revolution of 1986," "Bayan Ko," and PDI archives

Tanong ng Bayan
10pm M-F, ABC-5
After EDSA I and II: Magpapakabayani ka pa ba?
A. OO. Para sa bayan.
B. HINDI. Wala namang nangyayari.
C. DEPENDE. Para kanino, para sa ano?
D. MAGKANO? Ang hirap ng buhay ngayon, ano.
Text INQTV <letra ng inyong sagot> sa 2915 at abangan ang sagot ng bayan mamayang 10 p.m. sa INQTV on ABC-5.
ABC

White House contender backed fight vs Marcos

From page A1

"[H]opefully, Marcos will come to see the writing on the wall and there will be a peaceful transition of power," a report by *Agence France Presse* from the US capital had quoted Kerry as saying on Feb. 24, 1986.

Kerry also said that it "was not a total surprise" that Juan Ponce Enrile, then minister for defense and a key ally of Marcos, and Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, then chief of the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police (PC-INP) and a relative of the dictator, had abandoned their boss.

Kerry maintained that Corazon Aquino, widow of slain Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., was the "rightful elected president of the Philippines."

Filipino groups in the United States led by NAM held a rally to parallel what was happening on Edsa. They also denounced the massive cheating in the Feb. 7, 1986 snap elections that robbed Aquino of votes to favor Marcos.

Protesters slammed then US President Ronald Reagan for his remarks that the opposition had also cheated in the snap polls, according to Jose Abueva in the book "Chronology of a Revolution." He said they protested because Reagan appeared to side with Marcos.

According to Cecilia Guidote-Alvarez, who was the NAM rally's mistress of ceremonies, Senators Steve Solarz and Ted Kennedy likewise backed the democratic movement in the Philippines.

44 election observers

Kerry was in the Philippines when the snap election was held as part of the 20-man team of observers led by Sen. Richard Lugar. The team included other members of the US Congress and prominent private citizens.

They broke into smaller groups and dispersed throughout the Philippines to monitor the polls.

Marcos, who had been in power for nearly 20 years, called a snap election in November 1985 amid the continuing nationwide protests that began after the Aquino assassination in 1983 and pressure from the Reagan administration for democratic reforms and for Marcos to get a fresh mandate.

The American leader was also confronted with calls from congressmen and senators from his own Republican Party as well as the Democrats to repudiate Marcos and slash financial aid to the Philippines.

The presence of the US delegates, along with a 44-member bipartisan international observer team representing 19 countries, was meant to "encourage democratic forces on all sides to seek free and fair elections," according to Colombia's President Misael Passtrana, co-chair of the delegation.

Most liberal

Kerry was said to be the most liberal member of the American delegation. In his book "Waltzing With a Dictator," author Raymond Brown said Kerry was accompanied by Graeme Bannerman, staff director of the US Senate foreign relations committee, in his trip to Mindanao. Bannerman's main task was to "keep a leash on Kerry" and "prevent him from spouting off."

Brown wrote that the delegates had agreed that they would only issue a joint statement.

But in an interview on US television on Feb. 9, 1986, Kerry said there were "obvious irregularities" in the election. The most significant of these, he said, was that in many parts of the country "the counting has just stopped ... and therefore the chain of credibility has been broken."

According to Kerry, the situation in the Philippines was "very tense and volatile" and that it was obvious toward the end of the election that Marcos had failed to seek a fresh mandate that would restore his credibility.

The walkout

The American lawmaker was one of the members of the US team of observers asked by the opposition to join them at the Our Mother of Perpetual Help Church in Baclaran close to midnight of Feb. 9, after 30 technicians of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) had sought refuge in the church after walking out in protest over instructions to manipulate the results of the snap polls to favor Marcos.

At the church, former human rights lawyer and now Sen. Joker Arroyo and Kerry met with the poll employees and commended them for their bravery.

"I think these are the most damning comments that I've ever heard and the most dramatic event that I've witnessed in the course of my being here in the Philippines," Kerry was quoted by Sandra Burton in her book, "Impossible Dream: The Marcoses, the Aquinos, and the Unfinished Revolution."

'Condemn the fraud'

Hours earlier, the American observers gathered at the US Embassy in Manila to prepare a joint statement. According to Brown, one source had described the meeting as "contentious, vociferous."

Brown said the conservatives in the delegation, who comprised the majority, wanted to stress the "positives" of the electoral process—the enthusiasm of the voters and the role of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel). But Kerry and Allen Weinstein, a university professor, led a faction that wanted to condemn the poll fraud.

Conservatives prevail

The discussion was a bitter fight between the conservatives and Kerry's group that lasted for three hours. But in the end, the conservatives prevailed.

A statement issued by the US election observers stressed the "passionate commitment of Filipinos to democracy," the "vigorous campaign," the "lively debate," and the long lines of people waiting to vote, which they interpreted to be a demonstration of Filipinos' "faith in democracy."

The fraud was addressed only in one paragraph: "Sadly, however, we have witnessed and heard disturbing reports to undermine the integrity of the (electoral) process ... serious charges have been made in regard to the tabulation system."

But in the Feb. 24, 1986 Washington rally and AFP interview, Kerry said a lot more.

We shall have a family fun day with barbeque lunch on March 6 2004, 10:00 am at the site. For those who wish to join us, pls call 843-1530 or 0916-7808158
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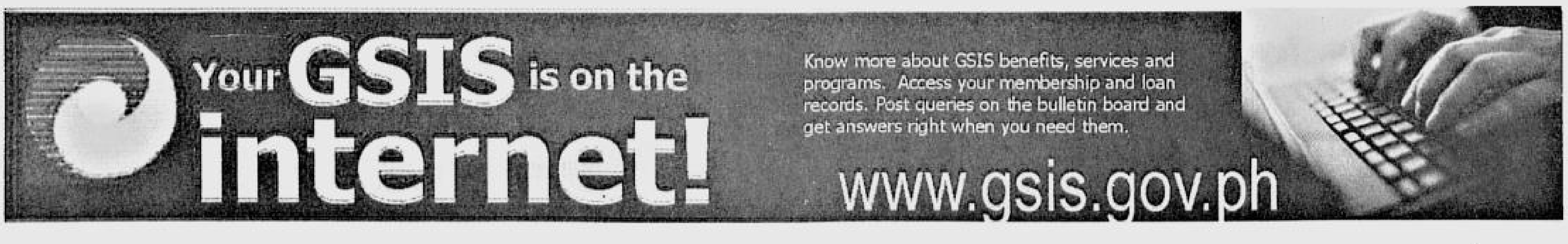

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SIX DIGIT (In exact order) 2 5 4 0 8 2

6/42 Luzon 8 18 19 23 31 38

Vis-Min 10 13 26 28 36 38

4 AFP battalions ready for demonstrations

By Edson Tandoc Jr., Tarra Quismundo, Leila Salaverria and Tina Santos

THE POLICE are expecting a not so eventful day as the nation marks the 18th anniversary of the first People Power revolution, but security officials are not taking any chances.

Starting midnight last night, the Western Police District activated Task Force Malacañang to secure the presidential palace.

Some 1,500 other policemen under the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) are also deployed at the Edsa Shrine and the People Power Monument on Edsa.

Soldiers on standby

According to NCRPO Director Ricardo de Leon, four battalions from the Armed Forces are on standby, ready to be deployed for any eventuality.

De Leon, however, explained that the soldiers, which number around 2,000, were part of regular deployment during events like people power anniversaries.

On top of these, all five police districts in Metro Manila have been put on heightened alert to secure vital installations and other public utilities.

"So far, so good," said WPD spokesperson Gerry Agunod, noting that "there have been no reports of groups planning any destabilization."

Agunod added that they were continuously monitoring for possible threats which might be made to coincide with the commemoration of the 1986 bloodless revolt.

The NCRPO said the "no permit, no rally" policy would be enforced, especially at the Edsa Shrine.

"Only religious rites will be allowed at the Edsa Shrine. Protest actions will be dispersed," De Leon stressed.

Edsa to remain open

Earlier, Chair Bayani Fernando of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority announced that no part of Edsa would be closed for the commemoration.

Instead, demonstrators, rally participants or protesters can gather along White Plains Road between Camp Aguinaldo and the Corinthian Gardens, Fernando said.

Eastern Police District Director Oscar Valenzuela said they were not expecting demonstrations today but that his men would exercise maximum tolerance should rallies take place. The EPD has jurisdiction over the Edsa Shrine.

DON'T be deceived, these lawmen are just saving their energy for rallies and demonstrations that are expected to take place at the People Power Monument at the corner of Edsa and White Plains Road in Quezon City. The police have said that they will implement the "no permit, no rally" policy. JOAN BONDOC

Monumento traffic gives way to Edsa 1

TRAFFIC around the Monumento Circle in Caloocan City will be rerouted this afternoon to give way to thanksgiving rites for the 1986 People Power revolt.

Key roads in the Monumento area will be closed to motorists starting 4 p.m. today.

Drivers coming from Samson Road going to Edsa or J.P. Rizal Avenue could turn right to Heroes del '96 Street and exit to 10th Avenue, or turn right to Francisco Street.

The Caloocan City government has arranged with the Victory Liner to allow motorists to use its terminal in going to J.P. Rizal Avenue from Samson Road.

Those from J.P. Rizal Avenue going to Edsa or MacArthur Highway could take a right at 8th, 9th or 10th Avenue to Serrano Street, exit to Edsa and take a U-turn going to Gen. Simon Street.

From MacArthur Highway, motorists going to Samson Road or J.P. Rizal Avenue could take a right at Potrero or Caimito Road, turn left to Dagohoy or Araneta Streets and exit to Samson Road.

From Edsa, the Monumento-bound lane will still be open but all motorists will have to turn right to MacArthur Highway.

While traffic jams are common in the Monumento area, officials are optimistic that traffic will not be heavy today because it is a non-working holiday.

Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo said they would be holding a "thanksgiving program for the fruits of People Power I."

Officials and employees from the cities of Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela, and the town of Navotas will attend the celebration.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina will be the guest speaker. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

MMDA claims smoother flow on Katipunan

By Margaux Ortiz

THE U-TURN slot, or the modified rotunda scheme on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City, has significantly improved traffic in the area since it was implemented early this month, according to a report of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center.

Lucy Castillo, an engineer of the MMDA-TOC Traffic Engineering Center, said travel speed on the avenue, which includes the 2.2 kilometer-stretch from Shuster (before C.P. Garcia Street) to Aurora Boulevard, has increased by as much as 35 percent.

Castillo said the data was based on two surveys conducted from Jan. 27 to Jan. 29, and Feb. 9 to Feb. 11.

The surveys measured the travel time and speed on Katipunan Avenue before and after five U-turn slots were installed last Feb. 3.

According to survey results, travel time from Shuster to Aurora Boulevard decreased by 34 percent.

Castillo said that while it once took seven minutes and four seconds to travel from Shuster to Aurora Boulevard, travel time has now improved to four minutes and 37 seconds.

Travel speed has increased as well, Castillo said, shooting up to 28.59 kilometers per hour from 18.69 kph.

The MMDA engineer said that travel time in the opposite direction of the avenue—from Aurora Boulevard to Shuster—decreased by 10 percent, while the travel speed increased by 11 percent.

She said that motorists who once traveled for nine minutes and 25 seconds from Aurora Boulevard to Shuster, could now travel for eight minutes and 32 seconds.

Travel speed also improved from 14.02 kph to 15.47 kph on the average, Castillo said.

The engineer said travel speed improved less from Aurora Boulevard to Shuster because Ateneo de Manila University's gate one was opened around the same time the scheme was implemented in the avenue.

But she clarified that the "minor problem" takes place between 6:30 and 7 a.m. when students with cars enter the university gate.

Turf war between jeepney, tricycle drivers in Caloocan far from over

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

AN UNEASY calm yesterday descended on the contested streets of Caloocan City as warring jeepney and tricycle drivers tried out the complicated rerouting plan worked out by the city government.

The first day of the rerouting scheme—which was meant to appease jeepney and tricycle drivers who have been at each others' throats for the past few weeks—turned out well, Pasang Masda president Obet Martin yesterday told the INQUIRER.

There were some moments of confusion in the early morning hours when some traffic policemen who were not informed of the new routing plan started accosting jeepney drivers entering 3rd Avenue, Martin said.

In a meeting with the drivers on Monday, Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo decided to let jeepneys from Malabon or Navotas bound for Recto in Manila to pass through 2nd Avenue from De Aquino Street.

Jeepneys from Recto going back to Malabon or Navotas will now have to take a more complicated route: From J.P. Rizal they will turn left to 3rd Avenue, turn left to Del Mundo Street, turn right to 4th Avenue, left to Sevilla Street and exit to 5th Avenue.

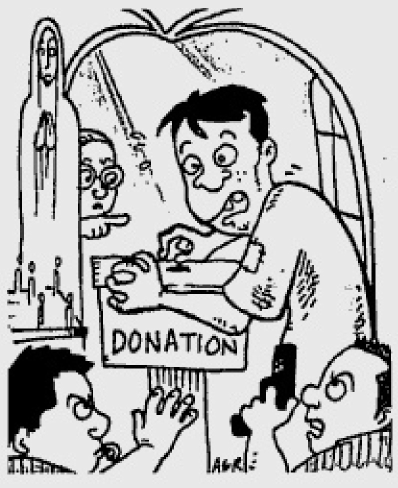
With the present setup, tricycle and jeepney drivers would no longer have to fight over passengers, since jeepney drivers get to pass through only a small stretch of every avenue, Malonzo said.

The other day, tricycle and jeepney drivers had a showdown of forces ready to battle it out—more than 150 drivers parked their jeepneys on C3 Road to protest what they called "harassment" from tricycle drivers. But the jeepney men later that day lost out in number when more than 300 tricycle drivers from 17 local organizations arrived and surrounded the jeepneys.

Though the rerouting of the jeepneys would spare the routes of tricycle groups on 2nd, 4th and 5th avenues, it would affect the routes of other groups, a tricycle driver told the INQUIRER. Only three of the 17 affected tricycle groups had representatives when the new rerouting plan was decided on Monday.

The tricycle drivers have been complaining that the jeepney drivers have been encroaching on their routes, taking away passengers. Early this month, tricycle drivers on 5th Avenue prevented jeepneys from passing through and diverted the jeepneys to 4th Avenue.

But the tricycle drivers on 4th Avenue resisted and diverted the jeepneys to 2nd Avenue. Last week, it was the tricycle drivers on 2nd Avenue and the barangay chair's turn to protest. Jeepney drivers were left with no other route to pass through going to J.P. Rizal Avenue, which led to the Monday showdown.



Cop nabs thief of San Sebastian

By Leila Salaverria

DIVINE intervention set in on Monday night when a carpenter was arrested for allegedly trying to steal money from a donation box inside the San Sebastian Church in Manila.

According to Western Police District Station 3 investigators, suspect Rafael Flores was seen by members of the church staff allegedly trying to get money out of the donation box.

The staff members then called in the police.

PO3 Efren Flores immediately responded and found Flores, 43, a resident of Sta. Ana., Manila, right in front of the box.

The arrest came two weeks after thieves broke into the San Agustin Church and stole parts of the 300-year-old Baby Jesus image on display.

According to WPD Station 3 investigators, they have earlier received reports of burglars breaking into the donation boxes of churches, like the one in Quiapo Church.

The investigators said that the robbers use chewing gum to fish out bills from the donation boxes.

METROBRIEFS

Killers' trail

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents have picked up the trail of three youths suspected of killing a St. Luke's Medical Center cardiologist in Laguna two years ago. According to an NBI official, the bureau has received reports that the three young suspects—Kissinger Kraft, Mark Alba and Rolando Rivera Jr.—have been spotted. The suspects, all students of the University of the Philippines, were 20 years old when they allegedly shot and killed Dr. Franklin Avellaneda. *Leila Salaverria*

Libel

SENIOR Insp. Samuel Tadeo, intelligence and investigation unit chief of the Bureau of Fire Protection, has filed a P2-million libel suit against a colleague who had accused him of approving fire inspections without authority. In a complaint filed before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, Tadeo said Insp. Virgilio Acabal, former chief of the BFP Quezon City Fire Safety Unit, caused the publication of an article which appeared in the May 31, 2003 issue of the INQUIRER. Tadeo said Acabal's statements were "false, untrue and fabricated." *Tina Santos*

Youth slain

JOEL Gonzales, 22, of Tondo, Manila, yesterday morning tried to take his frustration out on Jessie Bernardo, 17, also of Tondo. After Gonzales had his way, Bernardo lay dead on Primero de Mayo Street, said PO3 Rodelio Lingcong. Gonzales lost his temper and stabbed Bernardo after an unidentified girl refused to acknowledge the suspect, police said. *Catherine Sevilla*

Homecoming

THE SAINT Gregory the Great Seminary of Panal, Tabaco City, Albay, turned 50 last June 2003. It concludes its yearlong golden anniversary celebration with the First Grand Alumni Homecoming and Reunion on Feb. 27 and 28. The Ibalong and Tabak Festivals will be held on Feb. 27 at 1 p.m., courtesy of the Regional Office of the Department of Tourism.

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MULTI-MILLION BONANZA

Pacquiao inks rich fight deal

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

FILIPINO ring hero Manny Pacquiao yesterday left the negotiating table brandishing a multi-million dollar deal for two fights.

"Bring them all," was all Pacquiao needed to say to win the hearts—and subsequently the juicy contract—of HBO executives Kerry Davis and Xavier James.

Pacquiao's contract starts with a May 22 bout on HBO, possibly against WBA/IBF champ Juan Manuel Marquez.

PACQUIAO

Top Rank's Bob Arum, Marquez's promoter, said the most likely venue for the fight is Las Vegas or the 27,000-seat, $140-million Home Depot National Training Center on the campus of California State University.

If Pacquiao beats Marquez, the cable giant plans to pit the Filipino against Erik Morales, according to Fightnews.

"We sat down with Kerry Davis and Xavier James and they were very impressed because Manny Pacquiao wanted to battle all the fighters that I put on the table for consideration. Manny said, 'Bring them all!' That was music to HBO's ears," explained Murad Muhammad, Pacquiao's US promoter.

Davis, HBO vice president for sports, said: "It is easy to deal with a promoter who brings a fighter that would fight almost anyone."

RODNEY Santos of Barangay Ginebra looks for an open teammate off Edwin Bacani of Shell during the two teams' season-opening PBA game Sunday. Ginebra won, 82-71. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Coke Tigers open title bid vs TJ Hotdogs

GAMES TODAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
4:45 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Purefoods
7 p.m.—Red Bull vs Talk 'N Text

REINFORCED Conference champions Coca-Cola Tigers start their bid for back-to-back titles when they collide with the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs today at the resumption of the PBA Gran Matador Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Tigers, who retained the nucleus of their championship lineup, will parade import Mark Sanford and rookie Gary David, the Philippine Basketball League's two-time MVP, in the game set at 4:45 p.m.

But not much can be expected from the 6-foot-7 Sanford who strained a thigh muscle in practice a week ago.

"I plan to start him. But it remains to be seen if he can sustain his game," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

With their import limping and power forward Poch Juinio recovering from arthroscopic surgery, the Tigers will rely mostly on Rudy Hatfield, Rafi Reavis, Jeff Cariaso, Rob Wainwright and Johnny Abarrientos when they go up against Lenny Cooke and the TJ Hotdogs.

"We don't devise matchups. It's not our style. We will just run, pressure and see how we can stop their import," said Reyes.

Cooke averaged at least 39 points during his four-game stint with the Hotdogs last conference and is expected to be an unstoppable force again inside the paint.

Cooke, the top high school dribbler in the US before LeBron James, will join hands with Kerby Raymundo, Noy Castillo, Jun Limpot, Eddie Laure, Peter June Simon and rookies James Yap, Paul Artadi and Ervin Sotto.

The 6-foot-5 Limpot was acquired from Barangay Ginebra through a trade involving Sta. Lucia Realty while Laure was dealt by Shell in exchange for power forward Billy Mamaril.

"The plan is to play our game. For sure, Coca-Cola will run. Our ability to run with them and even outplay them will be the key to victory," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio.

In the other game, 2002 MVP Willie Miller makes his debut as a Phone Pal against his former team when Talk 'N Text clashes with Red Bull Barako at 7 p.m.

Traded by the Barakos during the off-sea-

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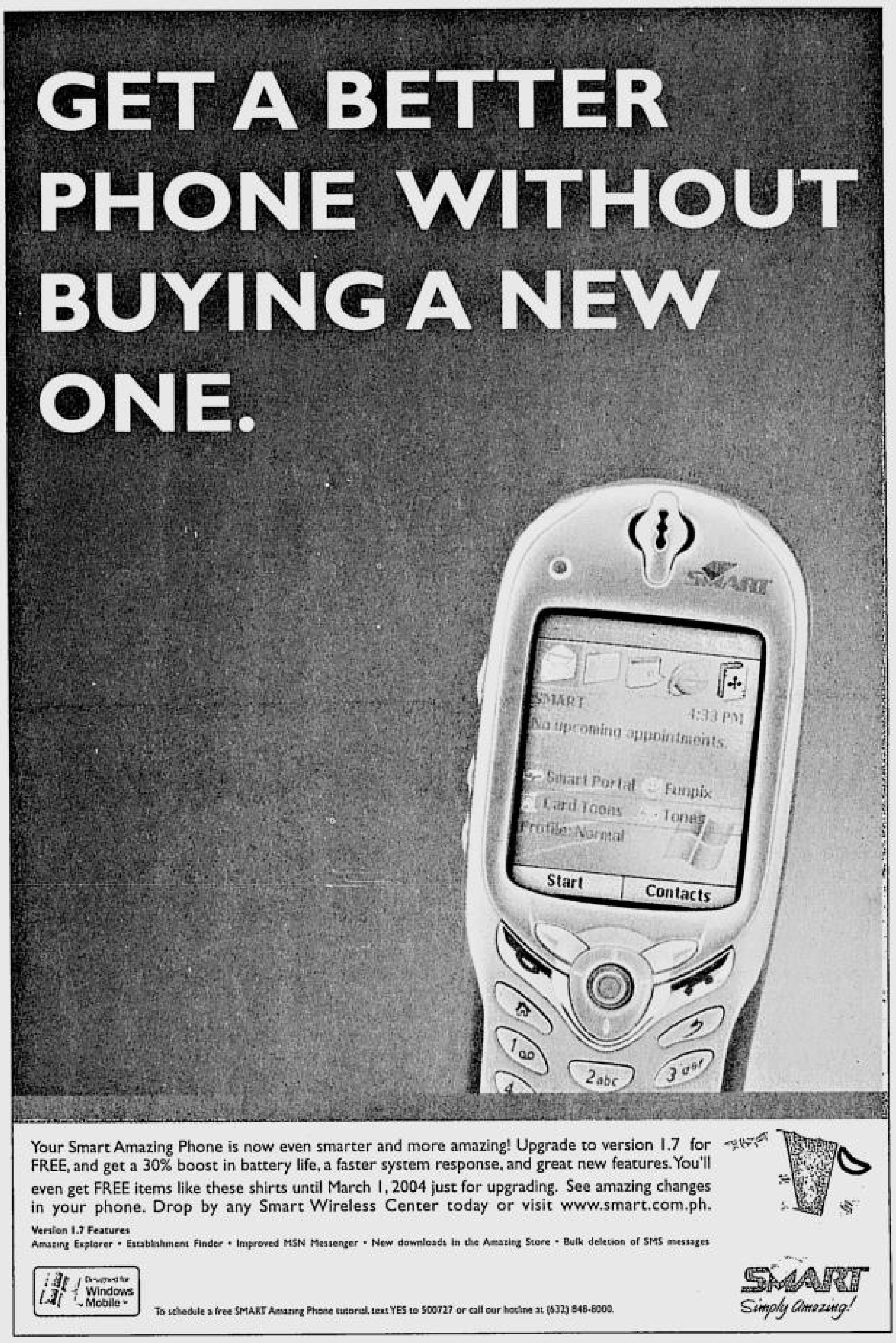
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Jorge expects POC, PSC to recognize Bapi soon

JORGE: Ready to rule

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE WAR of words flared up again yesterday in war-torn basketball-landia.

This time, the Nic Jorge-led group launched a new offensive: It's only a matter of time, the group declared, before they get the nod of both the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission.

Armed with recognition from the Securities and Exchange Commission and the courts, the Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi) declared they are ready to take over basketball affairs in the country.

"We have asked the POC to withdraw its recognition of the illegitimate BAP," said Jorge in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion, "so that we can start a new life."

"We are confident that POC and Fiba (international basketball federation) officials will see the light as we have submitted pertinent papers to back up our claim."

Bapi legal counsel Cecil Cinco also claimed that the PSC is set to pass a resolution withdrawing its support to the Basketball Association of the Philippines, headed by its president Tiny Literal and secretary general Graham Lim, and transferring it to Jorge's group.

But both the PSC and the POC said they are not about to break the status quo.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said they have not arrived at a decision even though they are "weighing our options" owing to the court's recognition of Jorge's group.

"We are a government agency and we have to consider the courts' decisions. The (PSC) board is asking for more time to deliberate on this," said Buhain.

POC president Celso Dayrit is in Athens to attend Olympic preparatory meetings, but POC spokesperson Gus Villanueva said Dayrit will ask the opinion of the International Olympic Committee regarding the basketball row.

In effect, the two sports bodies will continue to recognize the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) headed by Tiny Literal and Graham Lim.

Lim said they remain unperturbed by Jorge's pronouncements, pointing out that the BAP enjoys the support of the international basketball federation, or Fiba.

Daunting task for local pros

RP Open pro-am today

By Jong Arcano

THEIR confidence and consistency highly suspect due to the dearth of tournaments on the homefront, the frontliners of the local bid in the DHL 88th Philippine Open starting tomorrow face a daunting task against a foreign field enjoying all the privileges in the overseas tours.

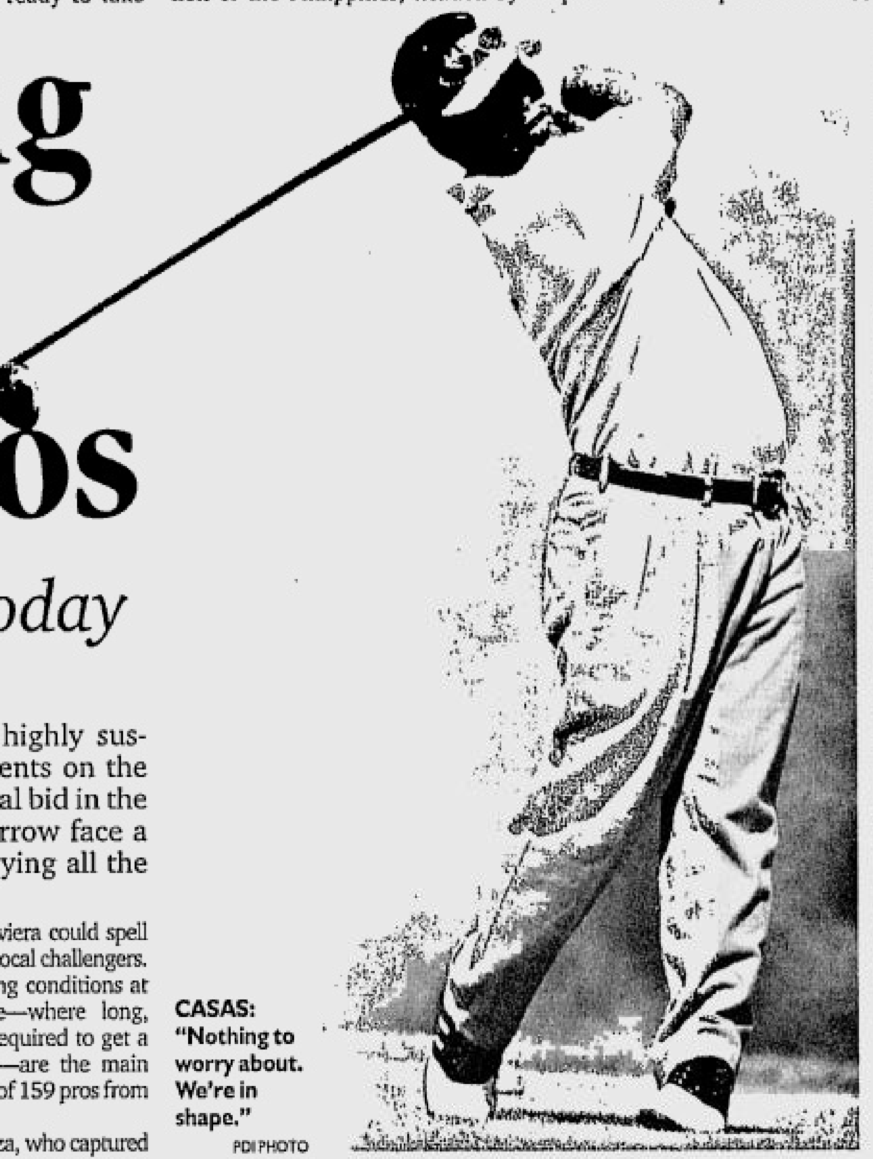
The only Filipino who's had enough competitive playing time, Frankie Miñoza, is still searching for that deadly touch that once made him the most feared shotmaker in Asia.

Today's pro-am side-event of the $150,000 Open at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club should give local fans a hint of the winning chances of Miñoza et al.

No Filipino has won on the Asian Tour over the past five years and the Open's return to Riviera could spell some magic for the local challengers.

The tough playing conditions at the Langer course—where long, straight shots are required to get a score close to par—are the main worries of the field of 159 pros from 18 countries.

Aside from Miñoza, who captured the Open in 1998, also in the pairings today are 1990 victor Robert Pactolerin and two other RP top guns who had won peso Opens, Cassius Casas (2001) and Gerald Rosales (2000).


CASAS: "Nothing to worry about. We're in shape."
PDI PHOTO

"Nothing to worry about, we're in shape. We've been preparing for it (Open) for quite sometime now," said Casas who needs a victory to regain his full playing rights on the Asian circuit.

The winning pro today gets P25,000.

SPORTSWATCH

Esguerra: Let's support Pasig run

HERMIE Esguerra, chair of the Pasig River Heritage Marathon, the annual 42-K race from Fort Santiago to Fort Bonifacio yesterday pointed out the sorry plight of the Pasig River. "The Pasig River is not a repository of waste. Even if we have all the money in the world, we still won't be able to clean up the Pasig River if people keep throwing their trash in there." On Sunday, the fourth Pasig River Heritage Marathon will take off at 4 a.m. at the Manila Cathedral and wind its tortuous way through main thoroughfares, back streets, side streets and main highways to reach its final destination at the Global City in Taguig. Esguerra was appointed last year by the Clean & Green Foundation Inc., organizers of the marathon, to chair the PHR Marathon event so that it can focus greater attention on its ultimate mission: to bring the Pasig River back to life. For inquiries, call 527-4390, 528-0504 or log on to www.heritagemarathon.org.

PBL to hold Aspirants' Camp March 2

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL League Commissioner's Office, located at the Makati Coliseum along Mascardo St., in Barangay La Paz, Makati, will be receiving applications for its Aspirants' Camp, from which the eight member teams will have a chance to draft players who have not previously applied to the league. Aspirants must bring ID photos and fill out application forms not later than March 2. For inquiries, call 897-6383 and look for Lanie Sagayap or Joey Lim.

Fr. Martin Cup meeting tomorrow

NOEL Ascue, tournament director of the Fr. Martin Cup basketball invitational league, will hold an organizational meeting at 2 p.m. tomorrow at the Quezon City Sports Club along E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City. Interested parties have to confirm their attendance by calling 645-9882 or 0917-4563163. Last year's league attracted 23 senior, seven women, 18 high school and four midget teams.

1st Bro. Benedict Cup at Manila Golf

THE DLSU Homecoming Class of '79 is hosting the inaugural alumni golf tournament named in honor of Bro. J. Benedict, FSC. Proceeds from the tournament will be for the benefit of the Bro. J. Benedict Scholarship Endowment Fund. The tournament will be played at the Manila Golf and Country Club using the System 36 format. The major sponsors for the tournament are Globe Telecom, Diamond Motors, PCI Equitable Bank and American Homes. For information, call the DLSAA at 523-6158.

Ibsa participants sign unity statement

PARTICIPANTS in the just concluded Ibsa (Philippine Blind Sports Federation) conference at Hotel Intercontinental signed a statement of unity and commitment to promote blind sports programs in the Asia and Oceania regions. "The participants, especially the Filipinos, gained a lot of experience and knowledge on how countries from different parts of the world approached blind sports," said PSC Commissioner for Sectoral Concerns Michael Barredo; Ibsa chair for Asia who conducted the Ibsa Strategic Planning Conference with Ibsa Oceania chair Raeburn Campbell McLeod.

"We struck a perfect balance between a serious conference and the human factor which was exhibited through the hospitality and warmth of the Filipinos," opined Ibsa secretary general Alberto Bravo Agudo.

The Ibsa Management Committee led by Ibsa president Enrique Perez of Spain also met and discussed preparations for the Ibsa world general assembly next year, the Ibsa world championships hosting in 2007 and other international competitions for the differently abled.

Football national tourney opens Feb. 29

AFTER the Pinoy football extravaganza of the 2003 Adidas U-19 Championship in the Visayas last October, national football competition returns to Luzon as the country's eight best men's teams gather in Metro Manila from Feb. 29 to March 6 for the PFF/SuperFerry National Championship, a prime event in the local football calendar this year. Six of eight finalists—Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Laguna, Negros Occidental and the National Capital Region (NCR)—await a finalist each from ongoing qualifiers in South East Luzon and West Mindanao to complete the championship cast. Aside from SuperFerry of the Aboitiz Transport System, other "partners-sponsors" of the Philippine Football Federation for this football-only event include Aboitiz-One, Red Ribbon Bakeshop, Adidas, Petron, Coca-Cola, New Pagcor and Unicef.

Philippine Sports Medicine Seminar

TOP Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and Fiba (International Basketball Federation) medical officials will be two of the resource persons in the 2004 Philippine Sports Medicine Seminar of the International Olympic Committee on March 1-3 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. They are Dr. Keun-Youl Kim, Continental Medical and Scientific representative of Asia to the IOC and OCA medical committee secretary and Dr. Andrew Pip, Fiba medical council official and Wada (World Anti-Doping Agency) consultant. Other speakers are Martin Ventura, sports medicine clinic head of the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center; Dr. Jose Raul Canlas, POC medical commission chair; Dr. Alejandro Pineda, Philippine Center for Sports Medicine consultant and Arturo Lazaro, PCSM consultant.For inquiries, call Elen Constantino at 521-9123 and 522-2374.

UA, PNU studes rule Gentxt aerobics

UNIVERSITY of Assumption and Philippine Normal University students romped off with top honors in the recent Globe Genbxt Invasion Sports Aerobics Marathons held separately at the UA indoor gym in San Fernando City, Pampanga and at the PNU gym in Manila. High school senior Jessica Kristine Batac and Ryan Urbano ruled the female and male divisions to pocket P5,000 each in the Pampanga competition, which lured 300 students. Elvin de Luna and Jimter Decena triumphed in the male and female brackets, respectively, in the Manila event which drew 150 contestants. Bacaran High School's neophyte trio of Ronel Avila, Ryan Ruales and Mark Wilson Sampang held off their UA rivals to rule the team competition and bag P10,000. Katrina Guerrero, Maria Kasen Olmilla and Marineth Potente won the team event at PNU.

Las Piñas 3-cock derby today

ABOUT 40 participants from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Las Piñas will vie for the cash prize of P300,000 in a 3-cock derby tonight at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum to be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Entry fee is P6,600 with derbyists Esmer Arnaiz and Councilor Simon as hosts. Derby weights must be submitted today, from 7 a.m. to noon. For inquiries, contact 873-1040 and 0920-5609404 (look for Julius). Slated next Wednesday, March 3, is another 3-cocker. Aside from the total pot to be divided to the winners, champions will receive an additional bonus of P8,000 each, according to LPC manager Alex Tobias. Entry fee is P4,000.

Ateneo seeks UAAP football crown

TOP QUALIFIER Ateneo is the slight underdog when it guns for the men's football crown against State University today in what could be the final day of competitions in the 66th UAAP season.

The Blue Eagles, champions in 1996 and 1998, and the Maroons collide at 3 p.m. at the Ateneo field in Loyola Heights.

La Salle and Far Eastern University dispute the women's crown at 1 p.m.

Ateneo, toting a league-best 6-2-2 win-draw-loss record, enjoys a twice-to-beat advantage over UP (5-4-1)

La Salle, the topnotcher in women's play with a 7-1-0 card, also needs to win today to seize the title.

The rubber match will be played at the Ateneo field on Sunday if necessary.

With the rest of the 14 sports on the UAAP calendar already concluded, University of Santo Tomas already has a lock on the overall championship with 284 points.

La Salle and UP are tied for second place with 258 points, not counting the results of the football finals and of the protests in athletics and women's softball.

The Blue Eagles rested their top guns last Sunday and lost to the Maroons, 2-0, at the close of the two-round football eliminations. The Maroons and the Eagles drew their match, 1-1, in the first round.

Other men's football results last Sunday saw dethroned champion University of the East (2-3-5) nip La Salle (0-3-7), 1-0, and Far Eastern (4-4-2) edge UST (3-4-3), also 1-0. In women's play, La Salle beat UST, 1-0, and UP drew with Ateneo, 1-1.

'Pain' clashes with 'Punisher' in PPBL elims

PHILIPPINE Boxing Federation No. 12 contender Tata "the Punisher" Polinar tests his punching power against No. 13 Micheal "the Pain" Agapay in tonight's elimination round tiff in the Philippine Pro-Boxing League National Invitational junior bantamweight championship.

Polinar and Agapay are vying for a quarterfinal slot in the fight to be telecast on IBC-13 at 9 p.m. Tanduay Rhum and Lactovitale are the program's backers.

Still smarting from his loss in Thailand last year, Polinar tries to regain respect in the 116-lb division and has vowed to go all out against his taller opponent.

"*Ibinuhos ko na ang lahat sa ensayo para manumbalik ang aking kumpiyansa sa sarili*," said the Pasay City-based fighter.

Agapay, the Cebuano fighter whose long limbs allow him to inflict pain from a safe distance, expects Polinar to fight him in close quarters.

The PPBL recently formalized a deal with Prime Channel for the fights' telecast on Destiny Cable Channel 16 in Metro Manila, and Prime's provincial affiliates every Friday from 4 p.m and Sunday from 9:30 p.m.

PBA upbeat despite busted Shell script

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THE ONLY fault of the PBA, if fault it could be called, was in failing to hand Shell coach John Moran a copy of the opening-day script.

That script called for the fielding of the top draft pick in Shell's first game of the season last Sunday.

You know, as in presenting the debutante to the adoring public, sending her out on her grand ball dance.

Now, everybody, except the shamed top draft pick himself, Rich Alvarez, has been crying foul.

Suddenly, Moran, not Ricardo Manapat, was the most unpopular guy in town.

There were calls for the instant banishment of the American.

There were even suggestions Moran could've been lynched, not necessarily by the 18 friends Alvarez had bought extra tickets for.

The good thing about Moran is that he typically refused to make an issue of it.

You know, like what that vagabond wit once advised: Don't explain, don't complain.

***

Was it Moran's way of saying he didn't need Alvarez in order to lose?

Yes, that could be one of the reasons.

Maybe he was trying to save Alvarez from something unexpected on the floor.

It's no longer easy to say.

Anyway, the post-game dugout feed said Moran went hard on his players, short of verbally abusing them, for failing to carry out their chores.

His main gripe centered on what he called failure of his charges to go hard, play man enough, in the thudding undergoal battles.

Someone quoted Moran as swearing his players "should've put a body on him."

Plainly put, Moran was cursing at the refusal of his men to go truly physical.

It was obvious Moran later realized the old instinct of self-preservation had taken a better of his players.

Will Moran finally give Alvarez a piece of the floor in Shell's next game?

Let's wait and see. After he has marred the script, what could stop him from doing it again?

It's not part of a coach's chore to play to the whims of the public.

***

What fans should actually celebrate is the big win scored by crowd favorite Ginebra on Sunday.

As expected, scribes and headline writers heaped praise on the Gin Kings, calling them a new-look team, revitalized, amazing and more.

At least, the Ginebra interior defense has shown tremendous improvement, as typified by the back-to-back rejection suffered by the high-leaping Billy Mamaril in the final quarter.

The Ginebra artillery, no doubt, has developed into an even meaner threat.

But the one weak point the Kings have to work hard on is the outer defense, mainly off the backcourt, often left untended by their giddy streak shooters.

This early, Ginebra must be made to realize that the success of the Barangay Ginebra team of the Jaworski days was anchored mainly on never-say-die defense.

Offense often came second in the order of priority.

***

A guy who readily lamented the Moran snub of the Alvarez fans on opening day was Dave Coros of the PBA media bureau.

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Coke Tigers open title bid. . .

From page A25

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Holcomb goes up against Red Bull's Carlos Wheeler while the Phone Pals test their new lineup versus Davonn Harp, Mick Pennisi, Junthy Valenzuela, Enrico Villanueva, Lordy Tugade and rookie Denver Lopez. *June Navarro*

Jorge expects POC, PSC to recognize Bapi soon

JORGE: Ready to rule

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE WAR of words flared up again yesterday in war-torn basketball-landia.

This time, the Nic Jorge-led group launched a new offensive: It's only a matter of time, the group declared, before they get the nod of both the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission.

Armed with recognition from the Securities and Exchange Commission and the courts, the Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. (Bapi) declared they are ready to take over basketball affairs in the country.

"We have asked the POC to withdraw its recognition of the illegitimate BAP," said Jorge in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion, "so that we can start a new life."

"We are confident that POC and Fiba (international basketball federation) officials will see the light as we have submitted pertinent papers to back up our claim."

Bapi legal counsel Cecil Cinco also claimed that the PSC is set to pass a resolution withdrawing its support to the Basketball Association of the Philippines, headed by its president Tiny Literal and secretary general Graham Lim, and transferring it to Jorge's group.

But both the PSC and the POC said they are not about to break the status quo.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said they have not arrived at a decision even though they are "weighing our options" owing to the court's recognition of Jorge's group.

"We are a government agency and we have to consider the courts' decisions. The (PSC) board is asking for more time to deliberate on this," said Buhain.

POC president Celso Dayrit is in Athens to attend Olympic preparatory meetings, but POC spokesperson Gus Villanueva said Dayrit will ask the opinion of the International Olympic Committee regarding the basketball row.

In effect, the two sports bodies will continue to recognize the Baskeball Association of the Philippines (BAP) headed by Tiny Literal and Graham Lim.

Lim said they remain unperturbed by Jorge's pronouncements, pointing out that the BAP enjoys the support of the international basketball federation, or Fiba.

Daunting task for local pros

RP Open pro-am today

By Jong Arcano

THEIR confidence and consistency highly suspect due to the dearth of tournaments on the homefront, the frontliners of the local bid in the DHL 88th Philippine Open starting tomorrow face a daunting task against a foreign field enjoying all the privileges in the overseas tours.

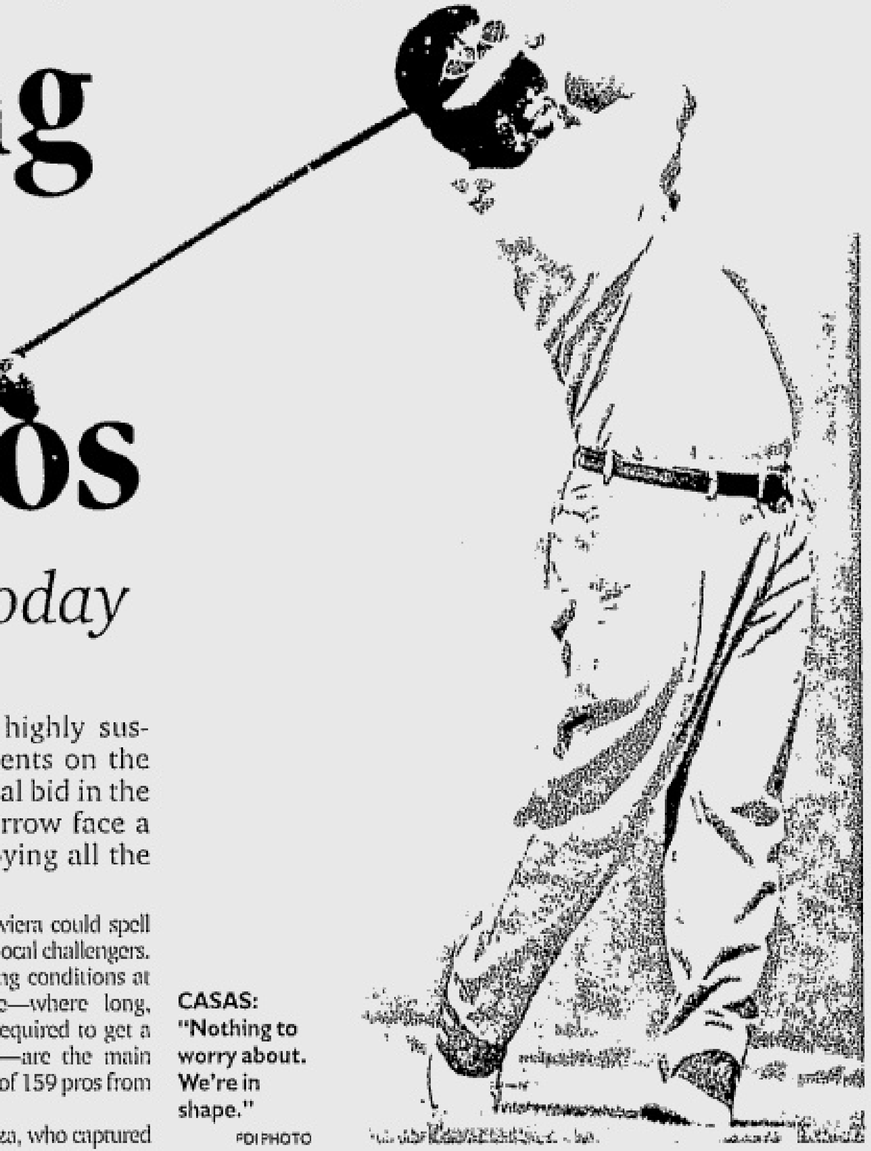
The only Filipino who's had enough competitive playing time, Frankie Miñoza, is still searching for that deadly touch that once made him the most feared shotmaker in Asia.

Today's pro-am side-event of the $150,000 Open at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club should give local fans a hint of the winning chances of Miñoza et al.

No Filipino has won on the Asian Tour over the past five years and the Open's return to Riviera could spell some magic for the local challengers.

The tough playing conditions at the Langer course—where long, straight shots are required to get a score close to par—are the main worries of the field of 159 pros from 18 countries.

Aside from Miñoza, who captured the Open in 1998, also in the pairings today are 1990 victor Robert Pactolerin and two other RP top guns who had won peso Opens, Cassius Casas (2001) and Gerald Rosales (2000).


CASAS: "Nothing to worry about. We're in shape."
PDI PHOTO

"Nothing to worry about, we're in shape. We've been preparing for it (Open) for quite sometime now," said Casas who needs a victory to regain his full playing rights on the Asian circuit.

The winning pro today gets P25,000.

Ateneo seeks UAAP football crown

TOP QUALIFIER Ateneo is the slight underdog when it guns for the men's football crown against State University today in what could be the final day of competitions in the 66th UAAP season.

The Blue Eagles, champions in 1996 and 1998, and the Maroons collide at 3 p.m. at the Ateneo field in Loyola Heights.

La Salle and Far Eastern University dispute the women's crown at 1 p.m.

Ateneo, toting a league-best 6-2-2 win-draw-loss record, enjoys a twice-to-beat advantage over UP (5-4-1)

La Salle, the topnotcher in women's play with a 7-1-0 card, also needs to win today to seize the title.

The rubber match will be played at the Ateneo field on Sunday if necessary.

With the rest of the 14 sports on the UAAP calendar already concluded, University of Santo Tomas already has a lock on the overall championship with 284 points.

La Salle and UP are tied for second place with 258 points, not counting the results of the football finals and of the protests in athletics and women's softball.

The Blue Eagles rested their top guns last Sunday and lost to the Maroons, 2-0, at the close of the two-round football eliminations. The Maroons and the Eagles drew their match, 1-1, in the first round.

Other men's football results last Sunday saw dethroned champion University of the East (2-3-5) nip La Salle (0-3-7), 1-0, and Far Eastern (4-4-2) edge UST (3-4-3), also 1-0. In women's play, La Salle beat UST, 1-0, and UP drew with Ateneo, 1-1.

'Pain' clashes with 'Punisher' in PPBL elims

PHILIPPINE Boxing Federation No. 12 contender Tata "the Punisher" Polinar tests his punching power against No. 13 Micheal "the Pain" Agapay in tonight's elimination round tiff in the Philippine Pro-Boxing League National Invitational junior bantamweight championship.

Polinar and Agapay are vying for a quarterfinal slot in the fight to be telecast on IBC-13 at 9 p.m. Tanduay Rhum and Lactovitale are the program's backers.

Still smarting from his loss in Thailand last year, Polinar tries to regain respect in the 116-lb division and has vowed to go all out against his taller opponent.

"*Ibinuhos ko na ang lahat sa ensayo para manumbalik ang aking kumpiyansa sa sarili*," said the Pasay City-based fighter.

Agapay, the Cebuano fighter whose long limbs allow him to inflict pain from a safe distance, expects Polinar to fight him in close quarters.

The PPBL recently formalized a deal with Prime Channel for the fights' telecast on Destiny Cable Channel 16 in Metro Manila, and Prime's provincial affiliates every Friday from 4 p.m and Sunday from 9:30 p.m.

PBA upbeat despite busted Shell script

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE ONLY fault of the PBA, if fault it could be called, was in failing to hand Shell coach John Moran a copy of the opening-day script.

That script called for the fielding of the top draft pick in Shell's first game of the season last Sunday.

You know, as in presenting the debutante to the adoring public, sending her out on her grand ball dance.

Now, everybody, except the shamed top draft pick himself, Rich Alvarez, has been crying foul.

Suddenly, Moran, not Ricardo Manapat, was the most unpopular guy in town.

There were calls for the instant banishment of the American.

There were even suggestions Moran could've been lynched, not necessarily by the 18 friends Alvarez had bought extra tickets for.

The good thing about Moran is that he typically refused to make an issue of it.

You know, like what that vagabond wit once advised: Don't explain, don't complain.

***

Was it Moran's way of saying he didn't need Alvarez in order to lose?

Yes, that could be one of the reasons.

Maybe he was trying to save Alvarez from something unexpected on the floor.

It's no longer easy to say.

Anyway, the post-game dugout feed said Moran went hard on his players, short of verbally abusing them, for failing to carry out their chores.

His main gripe centered on what he called failure of his charges to go hard, play man enough, in the thudding undergoal battles.

Someone quoted Moran as swearing his players "should've put a body on him."

Plainly put, Moran was cursing at the refusal of his men to go truly physical.

It was obvious Moran later realized the old instinct of self-preservation had taken a better of his players.

Will Moran finally give Alvarez a piece of the floor in Shell's next game?

Let's wait and see. After he has marred the script, what could stop him from doing it again?

It's not part of a coach's chore to play to the whims of the public.

**

What fans should actually celebrate is the big win scored by crowd favorite Ginebra on Sunday.

As expected, scribes and headline writers heaped praise on the Gin Kings, calling them a new-look team, revitalized, amazing and more.

At least, the Ginebra interior defense has shown tremendous improvement, as typified by the back-to-back rejection suffered by the high-leaping Billy Mamaril in the final quarter.

The Ginebra artillery, no doubt, has developed into an even meaner threat.

But the one weak point the Kings have to work hard on is the outer defense, mainly off the backcourt, often left untended by their giddy streak shooters.

This early, Ginebra must be made to realize that the success of the Barangay Ginebra team of the Jaworski days was anchored mainly on never-say-die defense.

Offense often came second in the order of priority.

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SPORTSWATCH

Esguerra: Let's support Pasig run

HERMIE Esguerra, chair of the Pasig River Heritage Marathon, the annual 42-K race from Fort Santiago to Fort Bonifacio yesterday pointed out the sorry plight of the Pasig River. "The Pasig River is not a repository of waste. Even if we have all the money in the world, we still won't be able to clean up the Pasig River if people keep throwing their trash in there." On Sunday, the fourth Pasig River Heritage Marathon will take off at 4 a.m. at the Manila Cathedral and wind its tortuous way through main thoroughfares, back streets, side streets and main highways to reach its final destination at the Global City in Taguig. Esguerra was appointed last year by the Clean & Green Foundation Inc., organizers of the marathon, to chair the PHR Marathon event so that it can focus greater attention on its ultimate mission: to bring the Pasig River back to life. For inquiries, call 527-4390, 528-0504 or log on to www.heritagemarathon.org.

PBL to hold Aspirants' Camp March 2

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL League Commissioner's Office, located at the Makati Coliseum along Mascardo St., in Barangay La Paz, Makati, will be receiving applications for its Aspirants' Camp, from which the eight member teams will have a chance to draft players who have not previously applied to the league. Aspirants must bring ID photos and fill out application forms not later than March 2. For inquiries, call 897-6383 and look for Lanie Sagayap or Joey Lim.

Fr. Martin Cup meeting tomorrow

NOEL Ascue, tournament director of the Fr. Martin Cup basketball invitational league, will hold an organizational meeting at 2 p.m. tomorrow at the Quezon City Sports Club along E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City. Interested parties have to confirm their attendance by calling 645-9882 or 0917-4563163. Last year's league attracted 23 senior, seven women, 18 high school and four midget teams.

1st Bro. Benedict Cup at Manila Golf

THE DLSU Homecoming Class of '79 is hosting the inaugural alumni golf tournament named in honor of Bro. J. Benedict, FSC. Proceeds from the tournament will be for the benefit of the Bro. J. Benedict Scholarship Endowment Fund. The tournament will be played at the Manila Golf and Country Club using the System 36 format. The major sponsors for the tournament are Globe Telecom, Diamond Motors, PCI Equitable Bank and American Homes. For information, call the DLSAA at 523-6158.

Ibsa participants sign unity statement

PARTICIPANTS in the just concluded Ibsa (Philippine Blind Sports Federation) conference at Hotel Intercontinental signed a statement of unity and commitment to promote blind sports programs in the Asia and Oceania regions. "The participants, especially the Filipinos, gained a lot of experience and knowledge on how countries from different parts of the world approached blind sports," said PSC Commissioner for Sectoral Concerns Michael Barredo; Ibsa chair for Asia who conducted the Ibsa Strategic Planning Conference with Ibsa Oceania chair Raeburn Campbell McLeod.

"We struck a perfect balance between a serious conference and the human factor which was exhibited through the hospitality and warmth of the Filipinos," opined Ibsa secretary general Alberto Bravo Agudo.

The Ibsa Management Committee led by Ibsa president Enrique Perez of Spain also met and discussed preparations for the Ibsa world general assembly next year, the Ibsa world championships hosting in 2007 and other international competitions for the differently abled.

Football national tourney opens Feb. 29

AFTER the Pinoy football extravaganza of the 2003 Adidas U-19 Championship in the Visayas last October, national football competition returns to Luzon as the country's eight best men's teams gather in Metro Manila from Feb. 29 to March 6 for the PFF/SuperFerry National Championship, a prime event in the local football calendar this year. Six of eight finalists—Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Laguna, Negros Occidental and the National Capital Region (NCR)—await a finalist each from ongoing qualifiers in South East Luzon and West Mindanao to complete the championship cast. Aside from SuperFerry of the Aboitiz Transport System, other "partners-sponsors" of the Philippine Football Federation for this football-only event include Aboitiz-One, Red Ribbon Bakeshop, Adidas, Petron, Coca-Cola, New Pagcor and Unicef.

Philippine Sports Medicine Seminar

TOP Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and Fiba (International Basketball Federation) medical officials will be two of the resource persons in the 2004 Philippine Sports Medicine Seminar of the International Olympic Committee on March 1-3 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. They are Dr. Keun-Youl Kim, Continental Medical and Scientific representative of Asia to the IOC and OCA medical committee secretary and Dr. Andrew Pip, Fiba medical council official and Wada (World Anti-Doping Agency) consultant. Other speakers are Martin Ventura, sports medicine clinic head of the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center; Dr. Jose Raul Canlas, POC medical commission chair; Dr. Alejandro Pineda, Philippine Center for Sports Medicine consultant and Arturo Lazaro, PCSM consultant.For inquiries, call Elen Constantino at 521-9123 and 522-2374.

UA, PNU studes rule Gentxt aerobics

UNIVERSITY of Assumption and Philippine Normal University students romped off with top honors in the recent Globe Gentxt Invasion Sports Aerobics Marathons held separately at the UA indoor gym in San Fernando City, Pampanga and at the PNU gym in Manila. High school senior Jessica Kristine Batac and Ryan Urbano ruled the female and male divisions to pocket P5,000 each in the Pampanga competition, which lured 300 students. Elvin de Luna and Jimler Decena triumphed in the male and female brackets, respectively, in the Manila event which drew 150 contestants. Bacaran High School's neophyte trio of Ronel Avila, Ryan Ruales and Mark Wilson Sampang held off their UA rivals to rule the team competition and bag P10,000. Katrina Guerrero, Maria Kasen Olmilla and Marineth Potente won the team event at PNU.

Las Piñas 3-cock derby today

ABOUT 40 participants from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Las Piñas will vie for the cash prize of P300,000 in a 3-cock derby tonight at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum to be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Entry fee is P6,600 with derbyists Esmer Arnaiz and Councilor Simon as hosts. Derby weights must be submitted today, from 7 a.m. to noon. For inquiries, contact 873-1040 and 0920-5609404 (look for Julius). Slated next Wednesday, March 3, is another 3-cocker. Aside from the total pot to be divided to the winners, champions will receive an additional bonus of P8,000 each, according to LPC manager Alex Tobias. Entry fee is P4,000.

Coke Tigers open title bid...

From page A25

son, Miller joins the star-studded Phone Pals cast led by Asi Taulava, Jimmy Alapag and Yancy de Ocampo. They will be reinforced by Talk 'N Text import Randy Holcomb.

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June Navarro

RED STAR RISING FAVORED

₱1-M Freedom Cup today

RED Star Rising is expected to set out as the top choice when the 2004 Freedom Cup race unfolds today at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

The 4-year-old chestnut colt, last year's Presidential Gold Cup and Open Classic champion, heads the 11-horse field seeing action in the P1-million event to be held to commemorate the 18th anniversary of the Edsa People Power Revolution.

Jointly sponsoring the race are the Philippine Racing Commission, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and host Manila Jockey Club Inc.

Red Star Rising (Khozaam-Ito's Choice), owned by Francis and Michael Trillana, will be ridden anew by veteran Manolito Daquis.

Aside from Red Star Rising, the other locals joining the race to be disputed over the unique distance of 1,750 meters are Free Wind, Dandansoy, War Hero and Success Story.

The imports participating are Absolute Charmer, Royal Catch, Real Slew, Treeline, Enchanted Mist and Time Gentleman.

Winner of the featured event gets P600,000, while the second to fourth finishers will receive P225,000, P125,000 and P50,000, respectively.

No less than former President Corazon C. Aquino will be honored during the occasion in recognition of her role in the restoration of Philippine democracy, as well as in rejuvenating the growth and development of the local horse racing industry.

"It was during the term of President Aquino when local horse racing was granted numerous incentives by the government that eventually paved the way for the industry's explosive growth," said Philracom chair Jaime Dilag.

The Freedom Cup race headlines MJCI's daylong program which is slated to start promptly at 1:30 p.m.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Alert One 2. Witch Craft 3. Long Road 4. Manila Mauler
Race 2—1. Western Dancer 2. Silakbo 3. King Yoji 4. Don't Tell Me 5. Beat D Heat
Race 3—1. Burst of Speed 2. Millennium Man 3. Magic Dave 4. Arbiter
Race 4—1. Dynamic Jonjon 2. Mountain Eagle 3. Dashing Magical Charm
Race 5—1. Aminin 2. Yokozuna/Capriole 3. Selectee 4. Pride of Mandaue
Race 6—1. Innovation 2. D'Pen Traveller 3. Great Hill 4. Portal Dancer 5. Mr. Alien
Race 7—1. Red Star Rising 2. Free Wind 3. War Hero 4. Royal Catch/Real Slew 5. Absolute Charmer
Race 8—1. Musika 2. Spoiler 3. Blue Iris 4. He's Splendid
Race 9—1. Whistle Blower 2. Romario 3. Material Trick 4. Habagat 5. Aspire 6. Dinner Dress
Race 10—1. Bukambibig 2. Race for Gold 3. Boogie Shoes 4. Astimegoesby 5. Risen Free
Race 11—1. Dalidali 2. St. Emilion 3. Lady Be Gold 4. Morning Glory 5. No Compromise 6. Eden's Quest
Race 12—1. San Diego Force 2. Striker 3. Espirikitik 4. Alexi's Magic
Race 13—1. Party Goer 2. Queen of Gaia 3. Mr. Lucas 4. That's My Tiger 5. Flying Machine 6. Cuadro de Alas

Battle of PBA titans

NO TEAM ever made bigger off-season moves in the Philippine Basketball Association than Talk 'N Text. Within days before the 2004 draft, it acquired ace point guard Willy Miller from Batang Red Bull to team up with Jimmy Alapag, forming one of the fastest and strongest backcourt combinations in the 30-year history of the league.

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

TNT also signed tall and hefty Yancy de Ocampo from Federal Express to provide the needed support to Fil-American behemoth Asi Taulava, boosting the team's already formidable frontline.

No wonder talent-laden Talk 'N Text is favored to beat badly depleted Batang Red Bull when they tangle at the resumption of the PBA Fiesta Conference tonight at the Big Dome. On the other hand, the odds are about even in today's opening setto between sister teams Coca-Cola, champion of the recently ended Reinforced Conference, and rejuvenated Purefoods.

"*Lamang sila* (They have the edge)," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao yesterday on the eve of the keenly awaited game between the two long-running rivals. "Our team has lost two mainstays —Miller (to TNT) and Jimwell (Torion), who is under suspension. Still, I'm not losing sleep because this team will always play its best."

However, the 43-year-old Guiao said he would be a lot happier if Commissioner Noli Eala reduces Torion's eight-month suspension and allows him to play in the Fiesta Conference, saying the fans are always assured of total commitment from the marquee point guard once he is back in the league.

"Red Bull is more versatile with Torion around," said Guiao.

A son of the late former Pampanga Gov. Bren Guiao, Yeng stressed their import, Carlos Wheeler, has a great offensive game and good for at least 20 to 25 points per game. "But I think he's not that serious yet as far as playing defense is concerned."

Guiao said he was also satisfied with Denver Lopez, the 6-foot-2 guard from California's State Fullerton who replaced Miller, even though Lopez, the No. 6 draft, is not as talented as Miller. But Lopez, who was signed for P4.5 million in two years, said he doesn't want to be pressured by comparing himself with Miller. "I don't even want to think about it. I will just work hard to help the team."

Truly, an interesting game is in the offing tonight when these two arch rivals collide.

***

For inquiries, call (044) 933-1214 or 0917-623-8417.

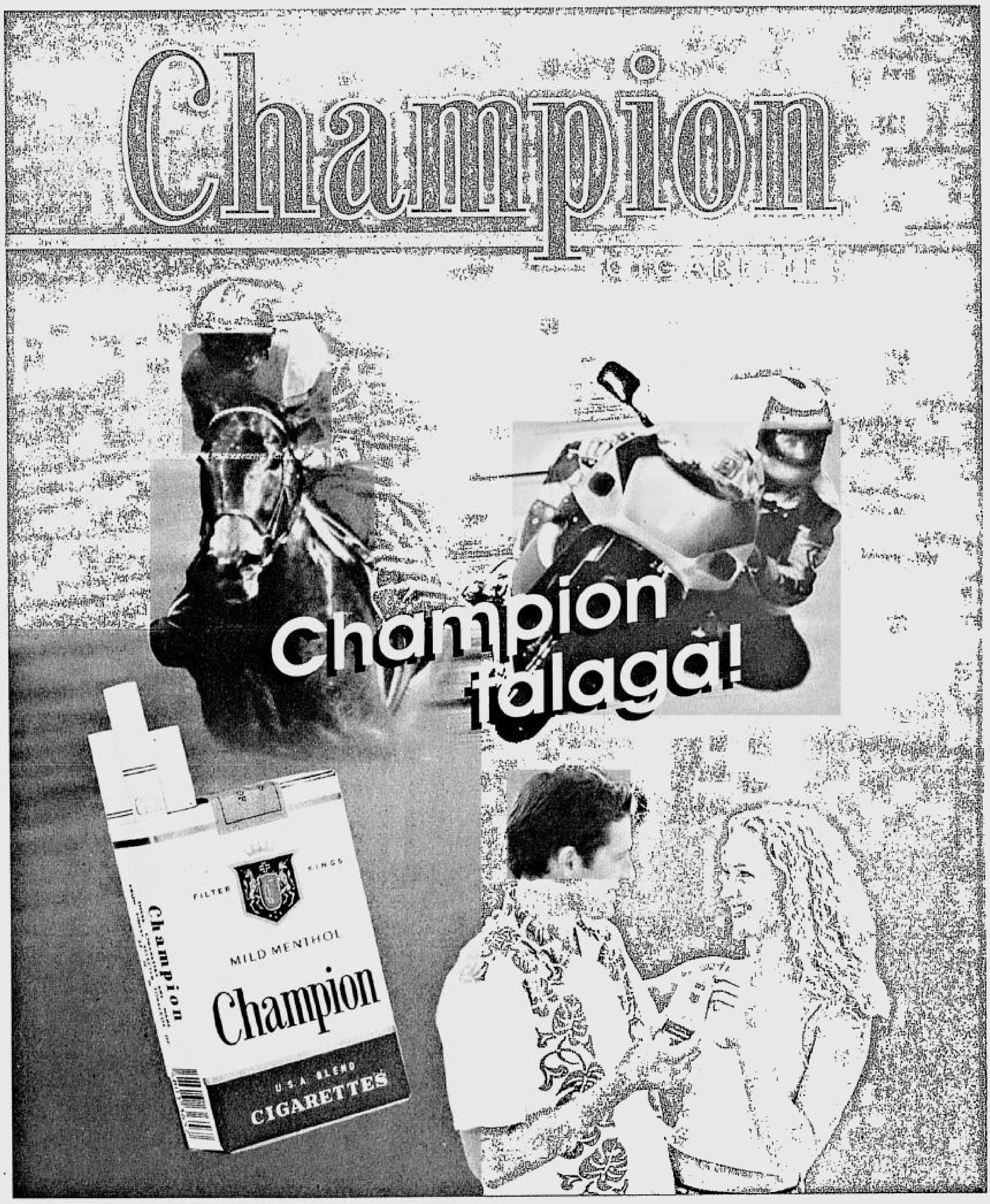
Cavaliers triumph

CLEVELAND—LeBron James scored 21 points, fellow rookie Jason Kapono added a season-high 19 and the Cleveland Cavaliers rallied from a 25-point deficit for an improbable 104-100 victory over the New Orleans Hornets.

Carlos Boozer had 24 points, and Jeff McInnis added 14 points and nine assists for the Cavs, who have won three straight in the past four days. *AP*

Complete results:

Cleveland 104, New Orleans 100; Detroit 76, Philadelphia 66; Portland 89, Miami 81; Memphis 109, Denver 106.



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Ricky Reyes' 'Ang Ganda ng 2004!' at the CCP Main Theater

STYLING maverick Ricky Reyes will launch an explosive beauty campaign on March 2, 6 p.m., at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Main Theater, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

"Ang Ganda ng 2004!" promises to be an even bigger extravaganza than last year's campaign, where Gandang Ricky Reyes image model Ms Gloria Romero went on stage on a motorcycle.

With the CCP theater dolled up a la "Moulin Rouge," "Ang Ganda ng 2004" celebrates beauty, style, fashion and campy wit, combining music and video and live performances of the biggest stars in local entertainment.

The event will pack the house with divas and celebrities, alongside dance numbers and musical performances featuring Gandang Ricky Reyes 2004 image models Tanya Garcia, Angel Locsin, Ruby Rodriguez, Joyce Jimenez, Ruffa Guttierez-Bektas, Pops Fernandez and Ms Gloria Romero.

A fashion show featuring the collection of Frederick Peralta with hair and makeup by Ricky Reyes makes for a fitting roundup of "Ang Ganda ng 2004."

The event reflects his mission to make everyone beautiful, according to Reyes.

"The images of beauty that are shown to us are misleading. It is always some gorgeous woman with a certain kind of look, hair and skin. You would think only supermodels can be beautiful. That's not true. There is so much beauty around us," he said.

Reyes believes that real beauty is found within, and "Ang Ganda ng 2004, celebrates everybody's beauty, regardless of size, shape, age, skin color, or gender preference."

Nora Aunor...

From page A32

over her body.

The treatments would cost Nora a little less than P50,000, inclusive of a discount, in exchange for subliminal endorsements by the actress, such as this story, for which Lising had to ask Nora's permission.

Middle-age

But long before Nora discovered Ellen's, middle-aged women, who belong to the working class or whose husbands are foreign overseas workers, have been coming to Ellen's for their facials.

"*Masa*, that's my market," says Lising. "I am known for my facials, which are inexpensive. Then I started acquiring equipment, like lasers, to enhance my treatments. Now, I even include plastic surgery and liposuction among the services I offer."

But a qualified surgeon is the one who does the lipo procedures, the nose jobs, and the boob enhancements. Ellen herself has gone under her doctor's knife for liposuction in her tummy.

Aesthetician

When it comes, however, to facials and topical products to be used on facial skin, it's Lising who's the resident expert.

She took courses in Hong Kong to become a qualified aesthetician. She is not a dermatologist or a surgeon. She is also not God.

"I can only enhance a woman's beauty, make her look younger than her age through facial treatments and lasers," says Lising. "But nobody's perfect. I cannot erase lines on Nora Aunor's face. They can only be minimized. You'd need surgery to remove them. I am popular for bringing back the bloom in a middle-aged woman's face."

Celebrities, like former beauty queens Melanie Marquez and Evangeline Pascual, bold actresses Stella L. and Hanni Miller, actresses Alma Concepcion and Elizabeth Oropesa are regulars at Ellen's. But more than the facials, it's the pampering that the customers come for in Ellen's. And Lising's conversation, in her chirpy voice, about how women don't have to look their age. Ever.

LISING: No miracles

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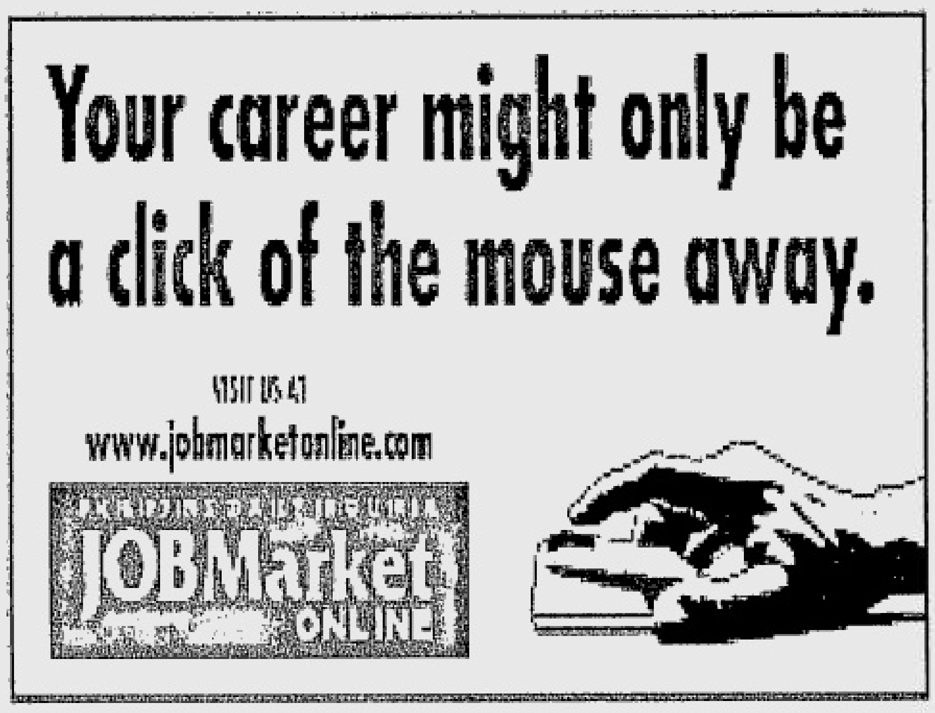

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what to watch
Romance
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
Jack Nicholson plays Harry Langer, who dates women 30 years his junior to feel young. Harry has journeyed to the Hamptons with his girlfriend Marin (Amanda Peet), to spend a wild weekend at her mother's vacant house. He unexpectedly suffers a heart attack and winds up being nursed by Marin's reluctant mom, Erica Barry (Diane Keaton). Meanwhile, Harry's thirty-something doctor (Keanu Reeves) steps in and starts to pursue Erica. Later on, Harry realizes that he is slowly falling in love with Erica.
now showing
Jack Diane
Something's Gotta Give
MTRCB Rating: R13
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up next
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March 17 Subject to MTRCB Rating
April 10 Subject to MTRCB Rating
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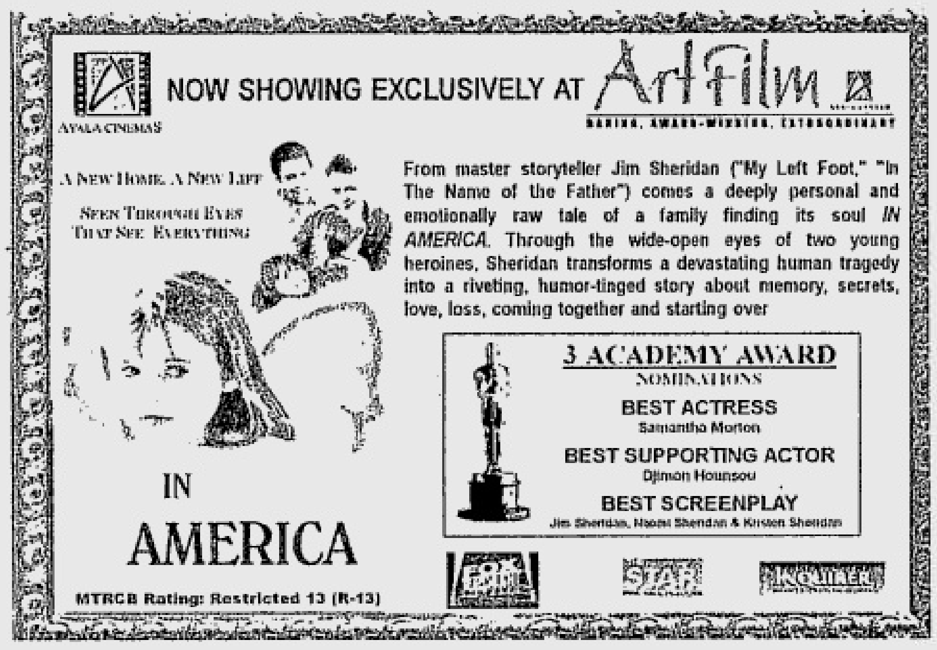

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3 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
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IN AMERICA
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JACK NICHOLSON DIANE KEATON KEANU REEVES
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
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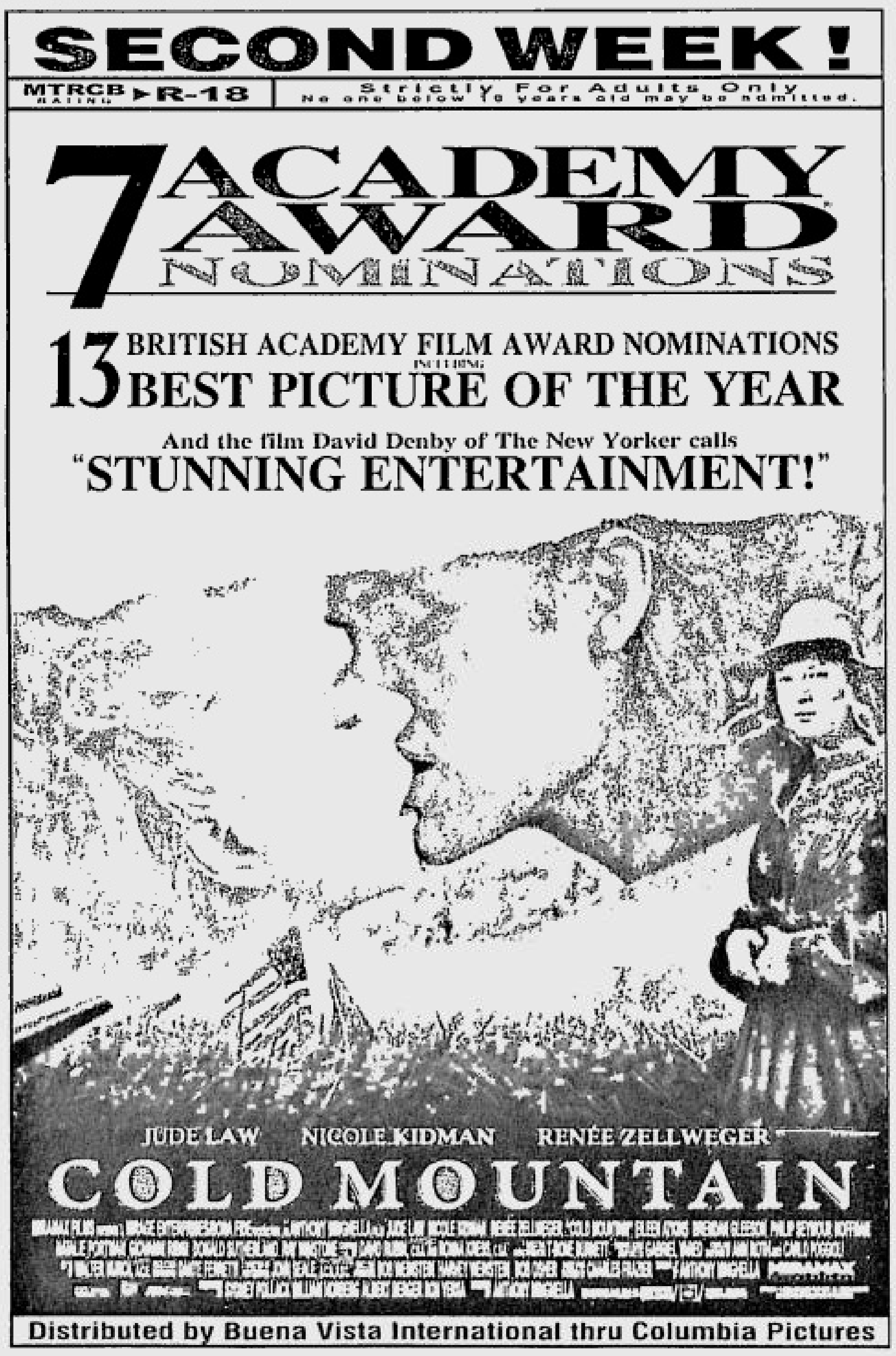

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7 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
13 BRITISH ACADEMY FILM AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR
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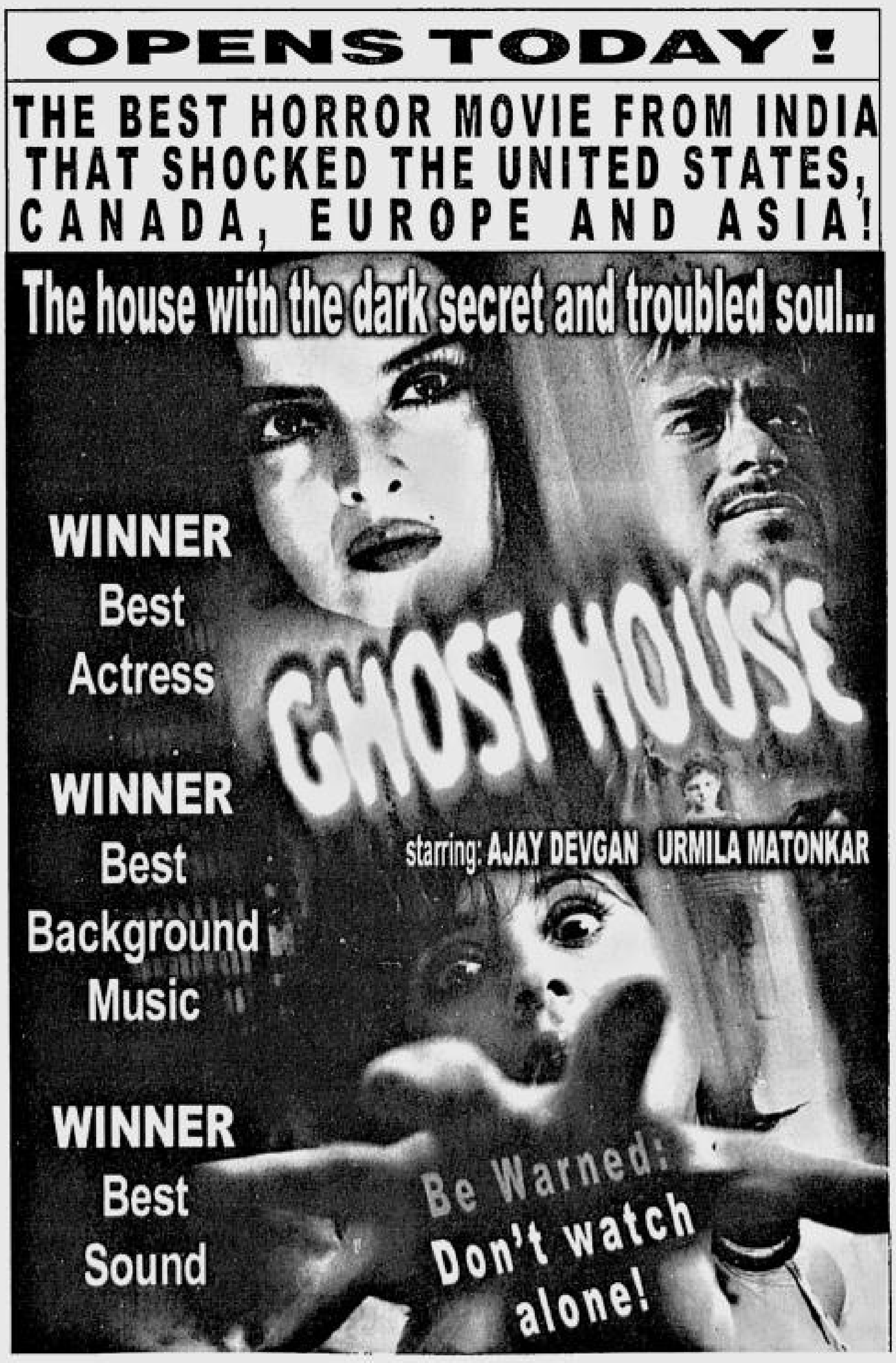

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Music video has new take on V-Day

A YOUNG man with roses in his hand chases after his girlfriend who speeds off in a car. A girl alone in bed, staring sadly at an engagement ring that is no longer in her finger. A guy braves the rain to set down a bouquet of flowers on a grave.

These are some of the images in the music video "Happy Valentine's Day," which is exclusively aired on MYX. Its artist, singer-songwriter Trina Belamide, says, "A lot of people can relate to each of these scenarios because these things do happen. It's a fact that many people spend Valentine's Day alone. So how do you say 'Happy Valentine's Day' to those who are lonely, broken-hearted or even grieving?"

"Happy Valentine's Day" is the first and only song from Asia so far to win one of the top prizes in the USA Songwriting Competition a few years ago where it competed against more than 31,000 other songs from over 50 countries around the world. Copies of the CD are available nationwide in popular record outlets.

Waterlemon, love after sight . . .

From page A31

acclaimed documentary-magazine show is finally making its TV comeback at 10 p.m., Feb. 28, on ABC-5.

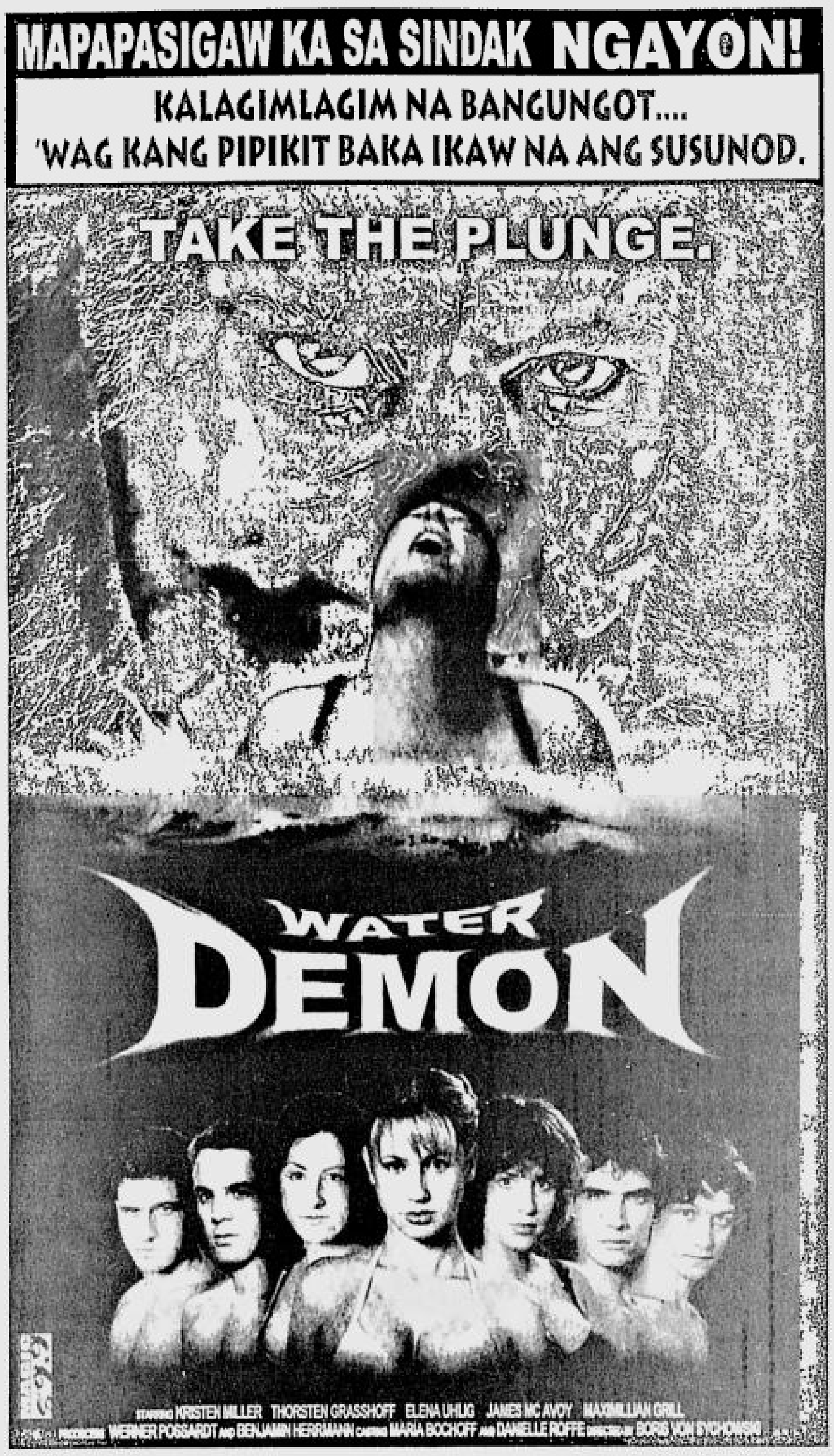
Let's make it a point to view the program's first telecast on Channel 5 to give the much-admired show a hearty "welcome back"!

'In America'

JIM Sheridan's "In America," now showing at Greenbelt 1 ArtFilm, is about an impoverished Irish family that tries to start a new life in New York City. The parents have a very hard time but their young daughters find their new home a magical place.

Their lives take a dramatic turn when the young girls befriend a mysterious neighbor (Djimon Hounsou).

"In America" has garnered three Oscar nominations, including Best Actress for Samantha Morton (She plays the girls' mother), Best Supporting Actor for Hounsou, and Best Original Screenplay.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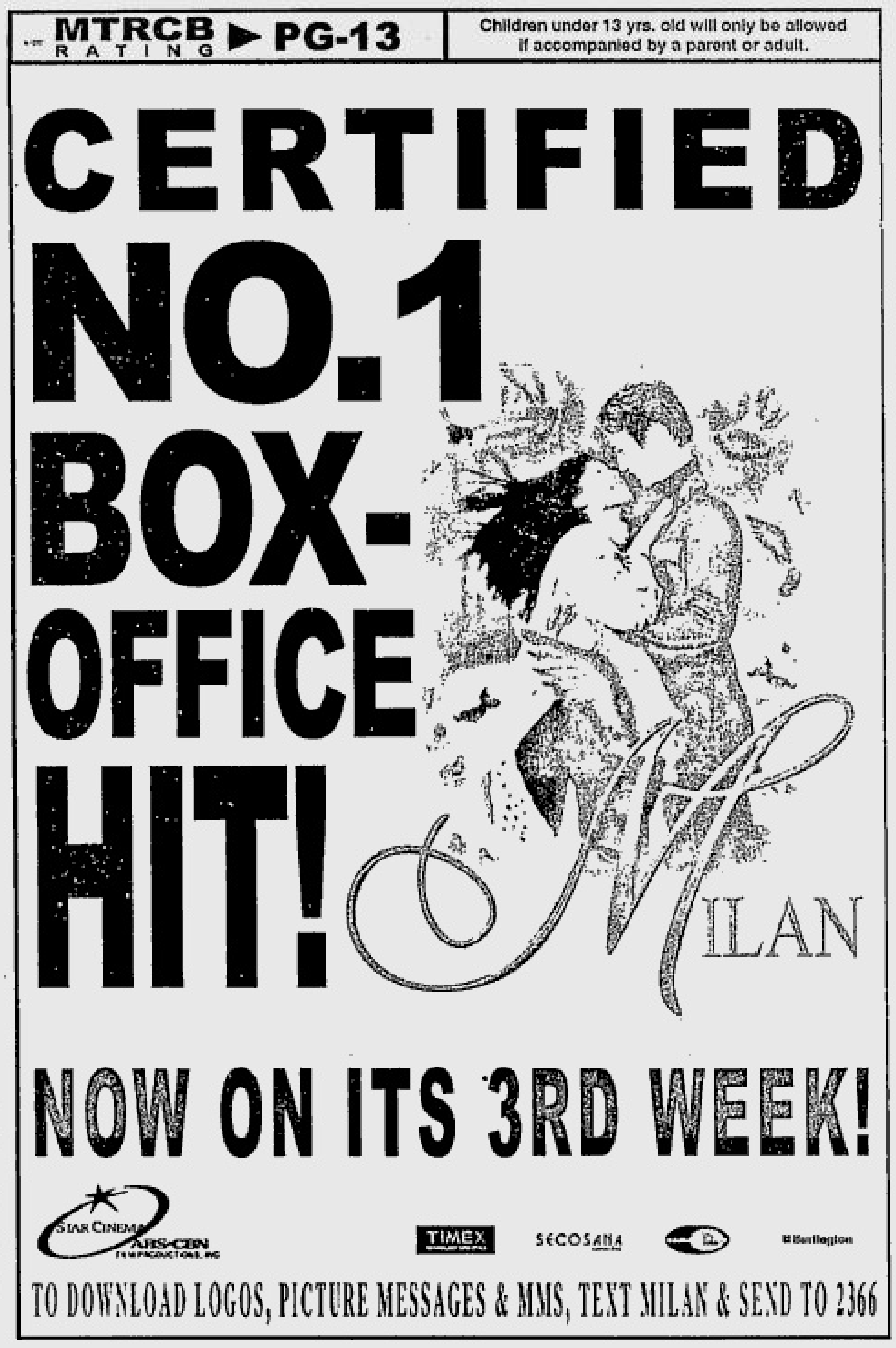
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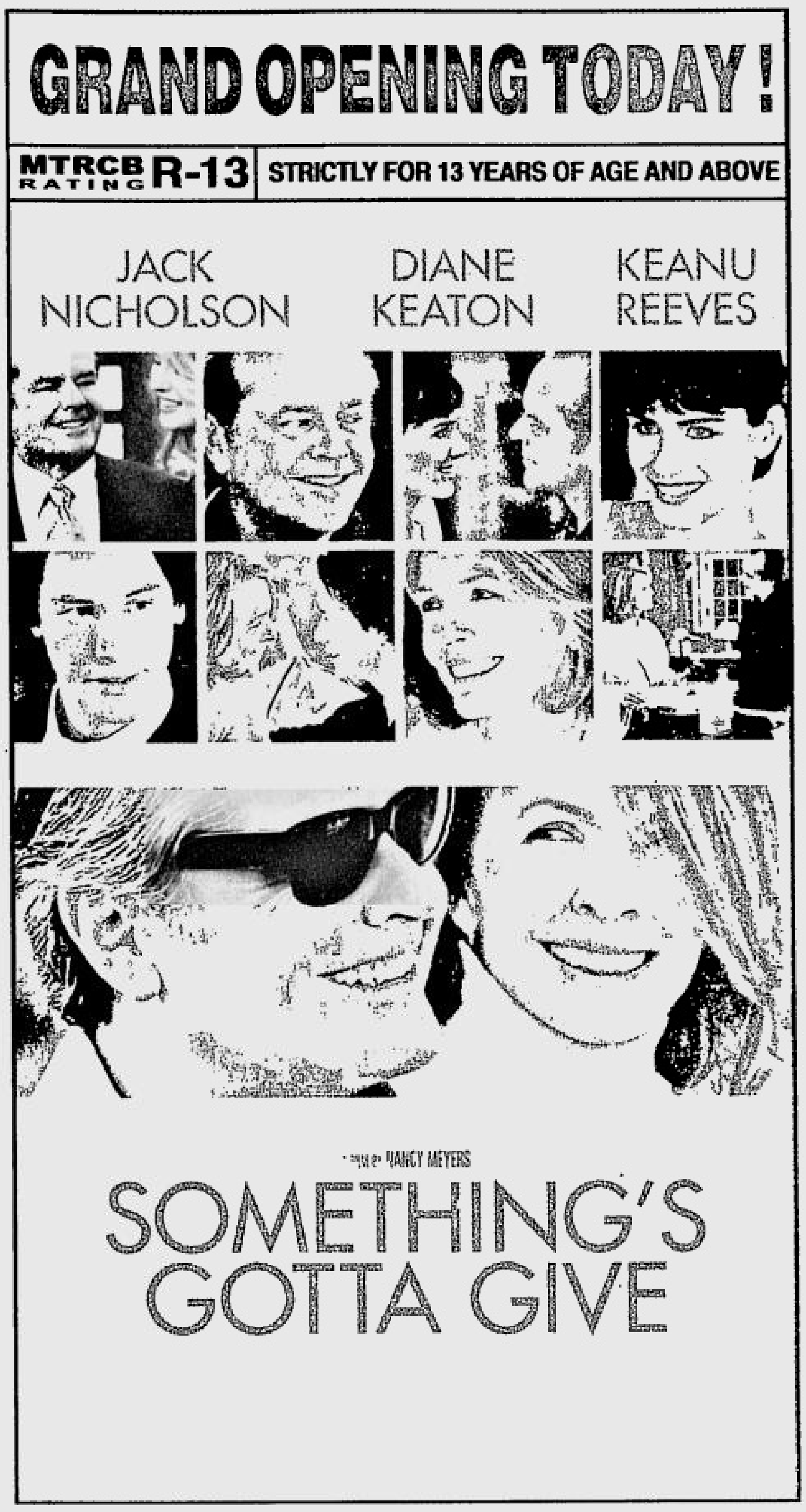
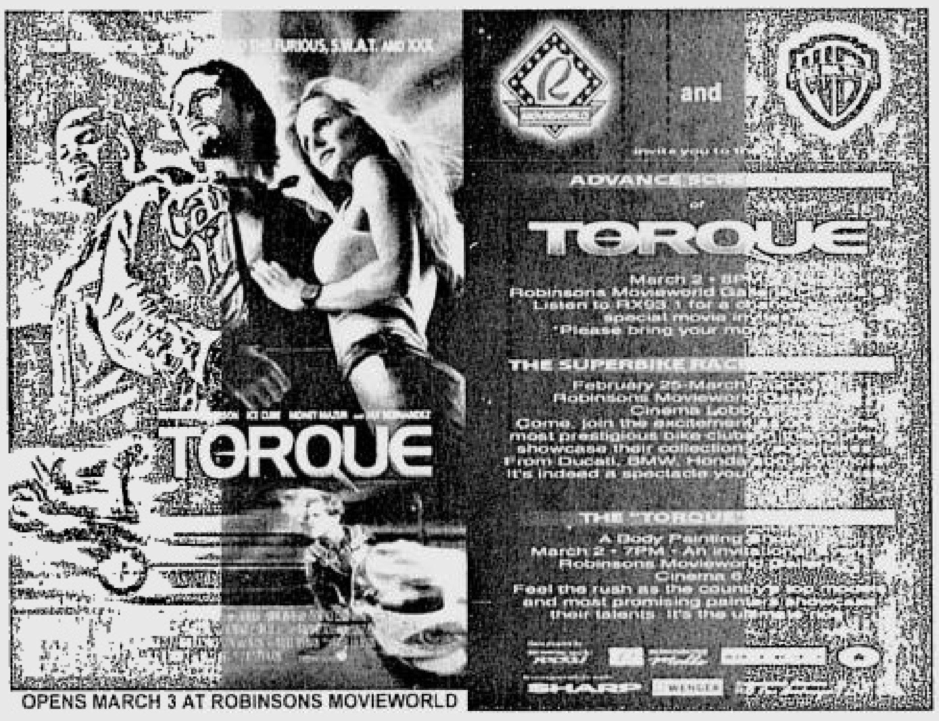

GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB RATING R-13
STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
JACK NICHOLSON
DIANE KEATON
KEANU REEVES
A FILM BY NANCY MEYERS
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE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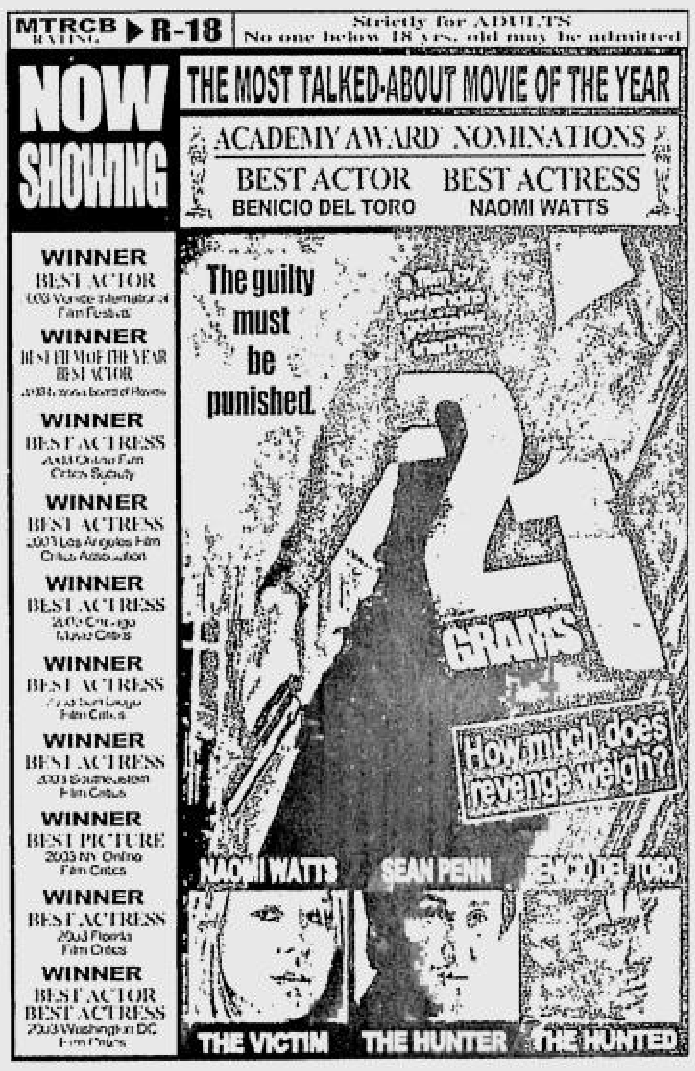
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21 GRAMS
How much does revenge weigh?
NAOMI WATTS SEAN PENN BENICIO DEL TORO
THE VICTIM THE HUNTER THE HUNTED

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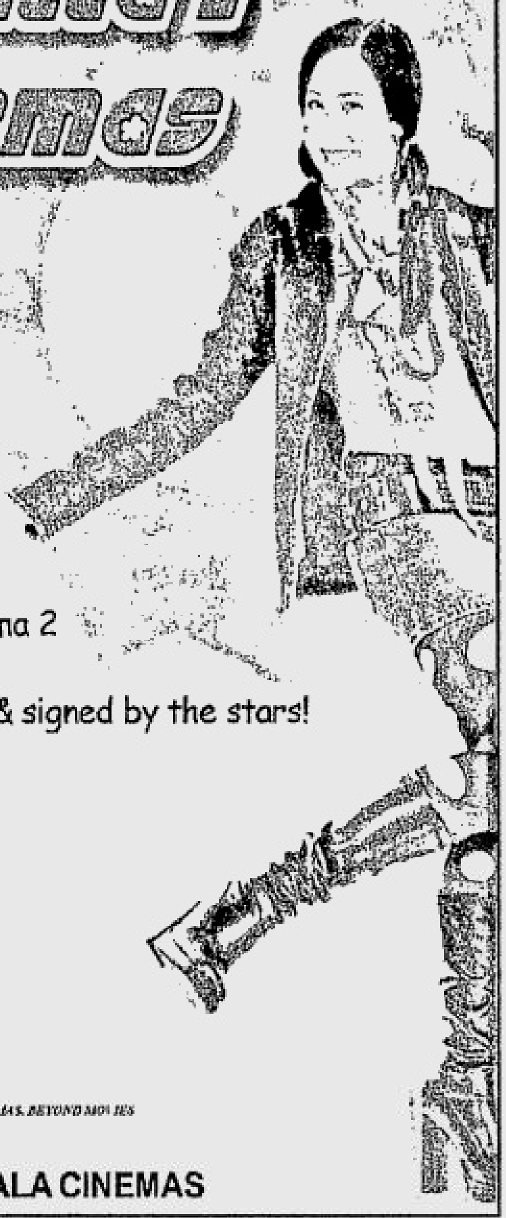
SHOW TIME

Gary V sings for kids

IN COMMEMORATION of the 35th anniversary of the Philippine Montessori Center, the school will hold a special concert dubbed "Thank G*!" Unicef Ambassador Gary Valenciano is one of the featured guests in this concert, which will be held on Feb. 28, 7 p.m., at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Guesting with Gary V are Jamie Rivera and Tricia Amper-Jimenez.

For the concert, the PMC Children's Instrumental Ensemble will perform classic pieces "Eine Kleine Nacht Musik" and "Toreador" from "Carmen," plus a special medley of songs from Walt Disney movies.



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JACK NICHOLSON DIANE KEATON KEANU REEVES

SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Nicholson & Keaton: 'Something' else

Academy Award winners Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton star in a sparkling and sophisticated romantic comedy from acclaimed writer/director Nancy Meyers (What Women Want, Father of the Bride), which proves that in matters of the heart, sometimes you can teach an old playboy new tricks.

Harry Sanborn (Jack Nicholson) is a New York music mogul with a libido much younger than his years. He has the world on a string -- and a string of beautiful young girlfriends to prove it. During a romantic rendezvous with his newest girlfriend, Marin, at her mother's Hamptons beach house, Harry develops chest pains and eventually winds up being nursed by Marin's reluctant mother, Erica Barry (Diane Keaton) -- a successful divorced New York playwright. In the process, Harry develops more heart pangs -- the romantic kind -- for Erica, a woman who is finally right for him in every way.

However, some habits die hard, and when Harry hesitates to pursue Erica, his charming thirty-something doctor (Keanu Reeves) becomes smitten with her. Harry undergoes a true change of heart when he fights to win Erica back.

For screening schedules, pls. call 729-7777

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Scarlett Johansson
Bill Murray

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BEST DIRECTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY
BEST ACTOR

8 BRITISH ACADEMY OF FILM AND TELEVISION ARTS AWARD NOMINATIONS
BRITISH ACADEMY OF FILM AND TELEVISION ARTS
WINNER
BEST ACTOR BEST ACTRESS BEST EDITING

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
Best Actor Best Screenplay
2004 Golden Globes

WINNER
Film of the Year
2003 National Board of Review

WINNER
Best Actor
Best Original Screenplay
2003 Online Film Critics Society

WINNER
Best Director
Best Actor
2003 New York Film Critics Circle

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTOR
2003 San Francisco Film Critics Circle

WINNER
Best Actor
2003 Los Angeles Film Critics Association

WINNER
Best Director
Best Actor
Best Actress
2003 Boston Society of Film Critics

WINNER
Best Film
Best Screenplay
Best Actor
2003 Toronto Film Critics Association

WINNER
Best Actor
2003 National Society of Film Critics

WINNER
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Best Director
Best Actor
Best Support Actress
2003 NY Film Critics Online

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FOCUS

From The Makers of Notting Hill

OPENS MARCH 3
Somewhere in this movie, you'll find the love of your life.

THE ULTIMATE ROMANTIC COMEDY
loveactually
Very romantic. Very comedy.

VALENCIANO

Rave US reviews

From page A32

Chuck Wilson of LA Weekly, an alternative publication, praised the Unitel Pictures production: "In this gentle comedy, set in an unnamed Philippine city, three women are offered a job sobbing and wailing at the five-day wake of a Chinese businessman—tradition says tears will assure his rise to heaven. The gig's a much-needed financial boon, especially for Stella (an excellent Sharon Cuneta), a reformed con artist whose ex-husband has granted her three weeks with their little boy, Bong (Julio Pacheco).

"The boy is so thrilled to be with his mother that he doesn't seem to notice her rundown apartment and hardscrabble life, and it's this unsentimental mother-child sweetness that anchors writer-director Mark Meily's disjointed film. Ambitiously, the filmmaker attempts to cover five days in the life of not only Stella but also her fellow criers, as well as the grieving Chinese family, whose magnanimous eldest son is beautifully played by Eric Quizon.

Equal to cash

"While Meily's point may be that each of these lives is worthy of a film of its own, the nonstop jumping around undercuts his momentum, especially in the film's overly languorous final third. Still, there's a refreshing optimism fueling his take on working-class life, as if Meily views friendship and neighborly generosity as currencies equal to cold, hard cash."

New York's film critics penned mixed reviews but were unanimous in their thumbs up for the cast's performance.

The New York Post's V.A. Musetto declared, "There aren't many surprises as the story unfolds in soap-opera fashion, with a happy ending for all concerned. Fortunately, Sharon Cuneta, the Philippine superstar who engagingly plays Stella, helps take your mind off the film's generic quality."

Mark Holcomb of The Village Voice weighed in with this comment: "Cuneta delivers an engaging, surprisingly coarse performance, considering her onetime Philippines-sweetheart status, and the subtle revelations concerning ritual and loss in Meily's story serve her well. More judicious editing was surely called for, but 'Crying Ladies' succeeds as first-rate melodrama."

Waterlemon, love after sight and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: What happened to your complaint about the lack of action on your brother's case?

Guest: I kept trying and trying but all my appeals fell on their ears!

(Poor ears!)

***

Host: So, you are still supporting your candidate despite all of the criticism he has been getting?

Guest: Oh, the criticism is just manufactured by his enemies. Wait and see, my candidate will surprise everyone by being a good leader upon assumpting into office!

(Upon assumpting? *Bago yon a.*)

***

Host: What will you do if anomalies persist in your office?

Guest: We will not tolerate them, I'm warning all offenders. We will definitely lower the broom on them!

(*Ay*, lower the broom!)

***

Host: Where did you meet your wife now?

Guest: At her birthday party.

Host: What was your first reaction to her?

Guest: Oh, it was love after sight!

(Do tell!)

***

Host: What local fruits have you tried on your visit here that you really like?

Guest: Oh, I've tasted and really like your waterlemon!

(*Ay*, waterlemon!)

***

Host: How has your experience in show biz as a starlet been so far?

Guest: I admit, not so good —but at least I found my life as a name!

(That's a consolation, we suppose . . .)

***

Host: Do you believe in premarital sex?

Guest: Definitely not. The sex act should be performed only between two married couples!

(That's—even worse!)

***

Host: Did you get hurt during the scuffle?

Guest: No, but I lost the wrist of my watch!

(Oh, so that's why they call it a wristwatch!)

***

Host: How do you think your new movie will turn out?

Guest: *Sana*—no, not *sana*, but I hope it will be memorable!

(*Kulit mo!*)

***

Host: You like this song?

Guest: Yeah, me and my girlfriend, this is one of our team song!

(Go, team!)

***

Host: So you think your presidential candidate will win?

Guest: Oh, definitely.

Host: You sound so sure!

Guest: I'm very sure. Everywhere I go, I say it all the time —without hesitant!

(Too bad, you were doing so well . . .)

'Probe Team' on ABC-5

FANS of "The Probe Team," take heart. Cheche Lazaro's

WATERLEMON/ A29

TV host Bernadette Sembrano considered giving up career

But ABS-CBN offer fell on her lap when she was jobless

By Marinel R. Cruz

SEMBRANO: Wants to move on

BROADCASTER Bernadette Sembrano was seriously considering quitting her television career after the incident with GMA 7 and "The Probe Team" last year.

She was referring to an episode in the the multi-awarded telemagazine "The Probe Team," where the segment she had researched and would have presented on the lifestyle check of Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) chair Efraim Genuino was not aired as scheduled.

Sembrano, who also hosted the public service program "Wish Ko Lang," told INQUIRER Entertainment reporters during a press conference last week that she had been so depressed after the incident and had considered working for a non-government organization.

"All I could think about was that I'm jobless," Sembrano said.

GMA 7 terminated its contract with Sembrano on Dec. 20, 2003 after she walked out of the late-evening newscast "Saksi" while the credits were still running.

Walkout

Her walkout was triggered by a statement read by co-anchor Arnold Clavio, which said the network would not be airing "The Probe Team" episode on Genuino.

The offer from ABS-CBN just fell on her lap, according to Sembrano. She admitted that she was still in a daze when she met with Charo Santos-Concio, ABS-CBN senior vice president for entertainment.

Last Monday, Sembrano joined the daily news program "Magandang Umaga Bayan" on Channel 2. She will also host her weekly documentary show and pinch hit for "TV Patrol" reporter Katherine de Castro, who is now on leave.

Switch

Sembrano's switch to Channel 2 from GMA 7 comes three months after INQUIRER Entertainment ran a story about how the Lopez-owned broadcast network had aggressively wooed the television host to move to its camp.

After GMA 7 announced that it would air the last episode of "The Probe Team" in November last year, Sembrano told INQUIRER Entertainment that she was torn between staying with GMA 7 and leaving with Cheche Lazaro, producer of "The Probe Team." She stayed with GMA 7 until Feb. 14.

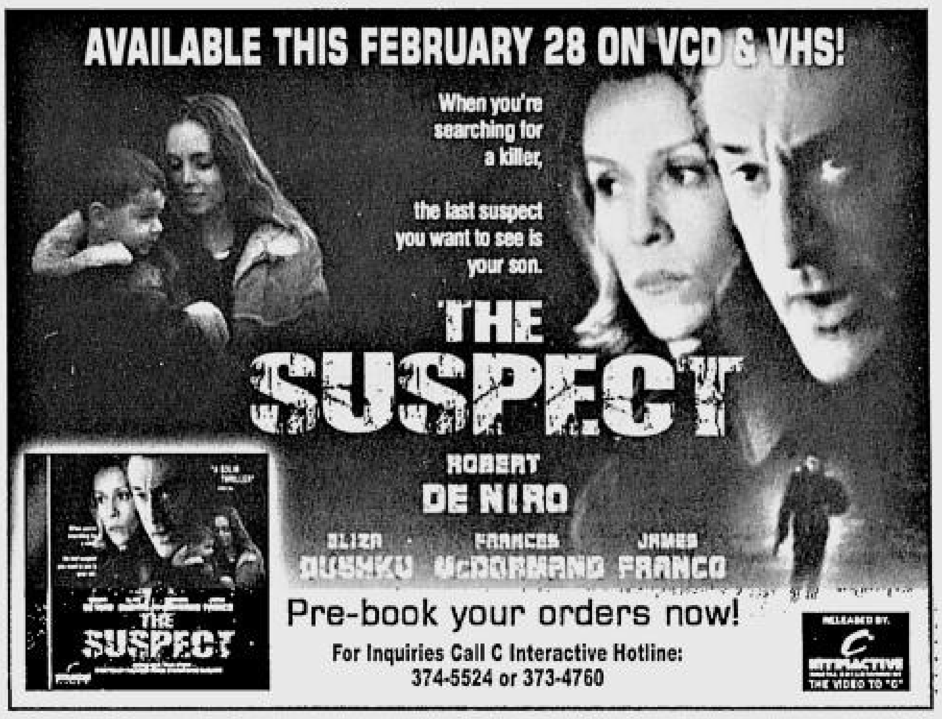
"The only reason people still saw me on GMA 7 was because the management had asked me to extend my work for 'Wish Ko Lang' up to Feb. 14," Sembrano explained. "They said (new host) Vicky Morales wasn't ready to take over yet."

She refused to talk about her relationship with her former network, saying "I'm trying to move on."

Buntis assembly slated at Megamall

A TRADE fair devoted to pregnant women will be held from March 10 to 13 by the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society Foundation Inc. at the SM Megatrade Hall 3 in Mandaluyong City.

The event, "Buntis Assembly and Trade Fair," aims to provide a concrete venue for gathering information and gaining experiences, stimulating discussions and challenging interactions for pregnant women who want to be ensured of a successful pregnancy. The event will be an interaction between the expectant mothers and doctors from POGS. Some of the activities are discussions on motherhood and other pre-natal care, free clinic and consultations, sampling, Buntis Fashion Show, workshops, demonstrations on childbirth, proper caring, among others. Participants and interested exhibitors may call The Next Step Events at 813-0148/893-9728 or Primer Productions at 8086899.



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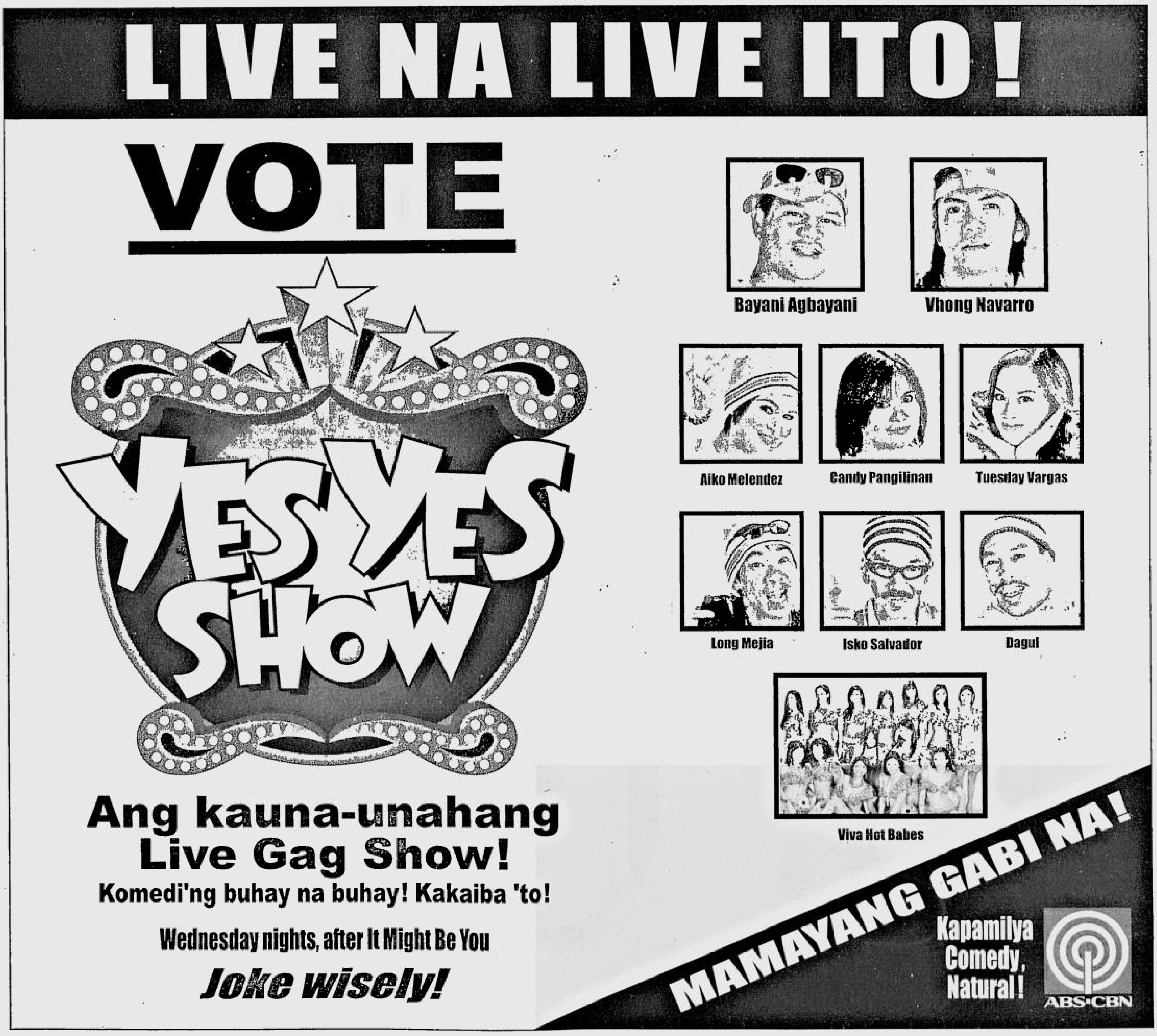

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

NORA at 50 is face to face with her mortality seen in the crow's feet around her eyes and the laugh lines by her mouth.

Nora Aunor fights aging

Actress gets 'whitening,' laser treatments

By Nini Valera

A PUBLICIZED tiff with a prominent beauty surgeon was what led Nora Aunor to Ellen's Aesthetic Center on Timog Avenue in Quezon City.

For three months now, Nora, 50, has been coming to Ellen's for facial and body treatments, according to Ellen Lising, proprietor of all Ellen branches in Metro Manila and Luzon.

"She was concerned about the fine lines under her eyes and the laugh lines around her mouth," says Lising. "She doesn't really want to become fair or white. She only wants to remove the dark spots on her skin, which came about because of an allergic reaction to a cosmetic that she used."

The actress also needs to lighten the dark lines around her neck, and patches of darkened skin in her armpits.

"But the armpits, they are very minor," says Lising, who is 50-years-old herself.

She is the first to say that she cannot make miracles. But she is quick to face a challenge. In Aunor, Lising's 20-year expertise in beautifying women, particularly in defying age, is put to a very public test, considering the actress' status and how media have quickly picked up the story.

No miracle worker

She describes Aunor as a "fabulous" woman, whose vanity she has yet to tap.

"I told Nora when she first came here that I can guarantee that she would look ten to 15 years younger is she comes regularly for treatments," says Lising. "But she keeps on skipping sessions that we have to start from scratch again when she returns."

Last Monday, Lising was waiting for Nora to arrive at her branch on Timog. The actress cancelled her appointment last Friday. This was reset for Monday, but Nora again missed her session. Lising could only shrug her shoulders.

"If she wants results, she must cooperate with me by coming regularly," Lising stressed. "Her first session took all of five hours. She probably got bored. If she comes at least once a week, the next sessions would be shorter."

Laser treatments, body peels

A trained aesthetician at the time the concept of aestheticians has yet to be invented, Lising has recommended laser treatments and facials for Nora's face, and a whole body treatment that would make use of a micropeel solution to scrub off the dead skin all

NORA/ A28

Rave US reviews for 'Crying Ladies'

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Shed happy tears for "Crying Ladies," the 29th Metro Manila Film Festival's best picture, which opened on Friday in select movie houses in Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, San Diego and Honolulu.

First-time filmmaker Mark Meily's interpretation of his Palanca award-winning screenplay ("Bayad Luha") earned good reviews, especially from two Los Angeles film critics. The reviewers singled out the performance of lead star Sharon Cuneta, with one describing her as "excellent."

Cuneta's co-stars, Hilda Koronel, Angel Aquino and Eric Quizon, also got favorable notices.

Endearing comedy

With his headline "Hardscrabble lives turn on a good cry," Los Angeles Times' Kevin Thomas raved, "An endearing comedy that deftly blends sentiment and grit and features a clutch of top Filipino stars, Mark Meily's 'Crying Ladies' centers on the lives of three friends coping with day-to-day life in one of Manila's poorest neighborhoods. High-spirited and good-natured, 'Crying Ladies' never loses touch with reality.

"Cuneta makes Stella highly appealing, an impetuous woman who makes mistakes, understands full well how steep a price she sometimes has to pay as a result, but remains determined to be upbeat and undefeated. She's scrappy and resilient, and her wide range of street-smart tactics to save a peso and scrape by are a source of much affectionate humor."

Engagingly amusing

"Koronel and Aquino also are engagingly amusing in their own foibles. In his assured feature directorial debut, Meily understands that a comedy that deals compassionately with loss also needs to end on a positive note yet wisely doesn't overdo it. The dreams that come true at the fade for Stella and her friends are modest. As women who have learned to live in the moment, they instinctively sense that nothing lasts forever."

RAVE/ A30

CRYING ladies Angel Aquino, Hilda Koronel, Sharon Cuneta with Ricky Davao

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WALLPAPER: C4
LYRICS: LY4

Invisible
Clay Aiken
Measure Of A Man
RINGTONE: N5
POLYTONE: T5
WALLPAPER: C5
LYRICS: LY5

Make You Mine
Nina
Smile
RINGTONE: N6
POLYTONE: T6
WALLPAPER: C6
LYRICS: LY6

Obvious
Westlife
Turnaround
RINGTONE: N7
POLYTONE: T7
WALLPAPER: C7
LYRICS: LY7

One Of These Days
Michelle Branch
Hotel Paper
RINGTONE: N8
POLYTONE: T8
WALLPAPER: C8
LYRICS: LY8

Ibabalik
Cara Sotto
Cara
RINGTONE: N9
POLYTONE: T9
WALLPAPER: C9
LYRICS: LY9

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E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

Nora Aunor fights aging

Actress gets 'whitening,' laser treatments

NORA at 50 is face to face with her mortality seen in the crow's feet around her eyes and the laugh lines by her mouth.

By Nini Valera

A PUBLICIZED tiff with a prominent beauty surgeon was what led Nora Aunor to Ellen's Aesthetic Center on Timog Avenue in Quezon City.

For three months now, Nora, 50, has been coming to Ellen's for facial and body treatments, according to Ellen Lising, proprietor of all Ellen branches in Metro Manila and Luzon.

"She was concerned about the fine lines under her eyes and the laugh lines around her mouth," says Lising. "She doesn't really want to become fair or white. She only wants to remove the dark spots on her skin, which came about because of an allergic reaction to a cosmetic that she used."

The actress also needs to lighten the dark lines around her neck, and patches of darkened skin in her armpits.

"But the armpits, they are very minor," says Lising, who is 50-years-old herself.

She is the first to say that she cannot make miracles. But she is quick to face a challenge. In Aunor, Lising's 20-year expertise in beautifying women, particularly in defying age, is put to a very public test, considering the actress' status and how media have quickly picked up the story.

No miracle worker

She describes Aunor as a "fabulous" woman, whose vanity she has yet to tap.

"I told Nora when she first came here that I can guarantee that she would look ten to 15 years younger is she comes regularly for treatments," says Lising. "But she keeps on skipping sessions that we have to start from scratch again when she returns."

Last Monday, Lising was waiting for Nora to arrive at her branch on Timog. The actress cancelled her appointment last Friday. This was reset for Monday, but Nora again missed her session. Lising could only shrug her shoulders.

"If she wants results, she must cooperate with me by coming regularly," Lising stressed. "Her first session took all of five hours. She probably got bored. If she comes at least once a week, the next sessions would be shorter."

Laser treatments, body peels

A trained aesthetician at the time the concept of aestheticians has yet to be invented, Lising has recommended laser treatments and facials for Nora's face, and a whole body treatment that would make use of a micropeel solution to scrub off the dead skin all

NORA/ A28

Rave US reviews for 'Crying Ladies'

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Shed happy tears for "Crying Ladies," the 29th Metro Manila Film Festival's best picture, which opened on Friday in select movie houses in Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, San Diego and Honolulu.

First-time filmmaker Mark Meily's interpretation of his Palanca award-winning screenplay ("Bayad Luha") earned good reviews, especially from two Los Angeles film critics. The reviewers singled out the performance of lead star Sharon Cuneta, with one describing her as "excellent."

Cuneta's co-stars, Hilda Koronel, Angel Aquino and Eric Quizon, also got favorable notices.

Endearing comedy

With his headline "Hardscrabble lives turn on a good cry," Los Angeles Times' Kevin Thomas raved, "An endearing comedy that deftly blends sentiment and grit and features a clutch of top Filipino stars, Mark Meily's 'Crying Ladies' centers on the lives of three friends coping with day-to-day life in one of Manila's poorest neighborhoods. High-spirited and good-natured, 'Crying Ladies' never loses touch with reality.

"Cuneta makes Stella highly appealing, an impetuous woman who makes mistakes, understands full well how steep a price she sometimes has to pay as a result, but remains determined to be upbeat and undefeated. She's scrappy and resilient, and her wide range of street-smart tactics to save a peso and scrape by are a source of much affectionate humor."

Engagingly amusing

"Koronel and Aquino also are engagingly amusing in their own foibles. In his assured feature directorial debut, Meily understands that a comedy that deals compassionately with loss also needs to end on a positive note yet wisely doesn't overdo it. The dreams that come true at the fade for Stella and her friends are modest. As women who have learned to live in the moment, they instinctively sense that nothing lasts forever."

RAVE/ A30

CRYING ladies Angel Aquino, Hilda Koronel, Sharon Cuneta with Ricky Davao

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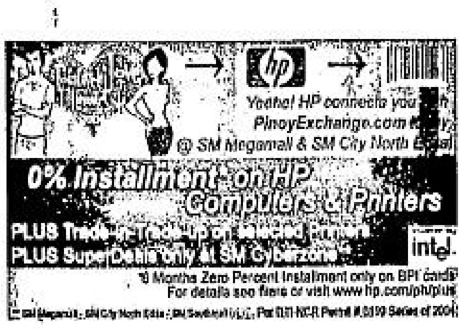

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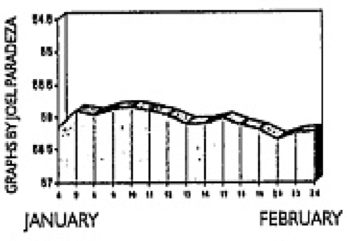

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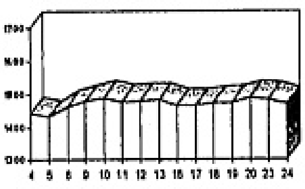

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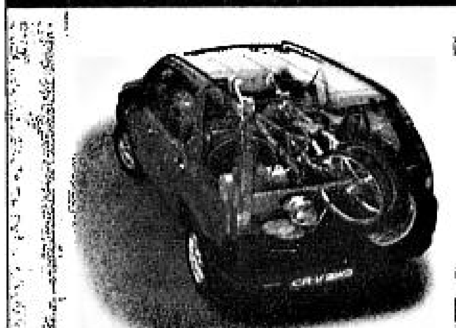

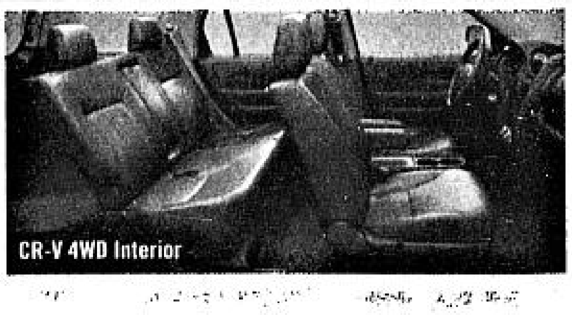

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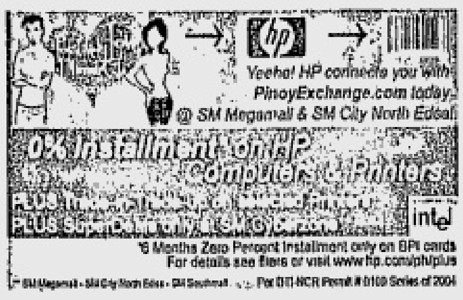
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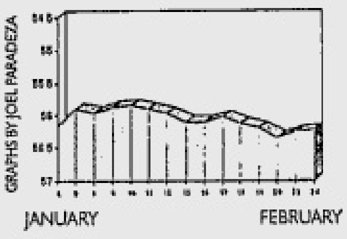

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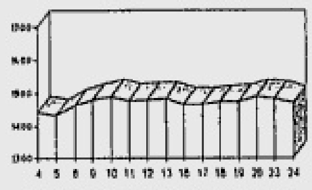

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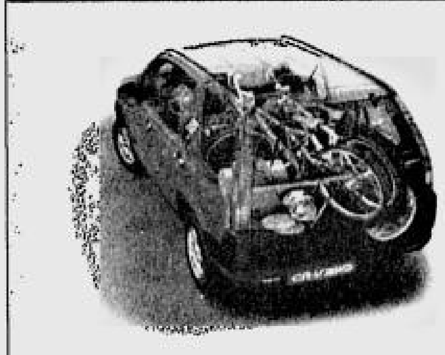

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Honda Cars Pasig Tel. No. (02) 634 2730, Fax No. 635 2613
Honda Cars Quezon City, Inc. Tel. Nos. (02) 712 0850 to 59, Fax No. 732 8559
Honda Cars Shaw Tel. No. (02) 717 1681, Fax No. 718 2036
Honda Cars Manila Tel. No. (02) 562 4548, Fax No. 562 4548
Honda Cars Fairview Tel. No. (02) 935 2055, Fax No. 935 2645
Honda Cars Marikina Tel. Nos. (02) 998 0512, 998 1142, Fax No. 942 3501

Provincial
Honda Cars Cebu, Inc. Tel. No. (032) 231 3502, Fax No. (032) 231 4488
Honda Cars San Pablo, Inc. Tel. Nos. (049) 562 7713 to 14, Fax No. (049) 562 7712
Honda Cars Pangasinan Tel. Nos. (075) 522 8479, 522 1488, Fax No. (075) 522 1490
Honda Cars Davao, Inc. Tel. Nos. (082) 221 7406, 222 2170 to 71, Fax No. (082) 221 7407
Honda Cars Pampanga, Inc. Tel. No. (045) 963 5556, Fax No. (045) 963 5554
Honda Cars Negros Occidental Tel. No. (034) 707 8000, Fax No. (034) 441 1276
Honda Cars Tarlac, Inc. Tel. Nos. (045) 982 8002 to 04, Fax No. (045) 982 8007
Honda Cars Cagayan Tel. Nos. (088) 858 4010 to 11, Fax No. (088) 858 4015
Honda Cars Gen. Santos, Inc. Tel. Nos. (083) 553 9796 to 97, Fax No. (083) 301 3109
Honda Cars Isabela, Inc. Tel. No. (078) 652 1245, Fax No. (078) 652 1248
Honda Cars Mandaue Tel. No. (032) 422 3700, Fax No. (032) 422 3600

Lots to TEL about PLDT

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

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* * *

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* * *

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"So what are you going to do this year?"

"I'm taking Ellen with me."

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For this year, 2004, Mr. Pangalinan projected P18 billion but this seems conservative, given that the company wrote off P4.1 billion in respect of Home Cable and other investments. In addition, PLDT paid substantial severance compensation to the one-sixth of the workforce which was laid-off as part of an efficiency drive. Last year, Piltel lost another P3.3 billion, but this year should make a profit of P400 million. I believe that profits will be closer to P20 billion unless there are further write-offs. Earnings per share are P55.70 so the P/E ratio is 17.5.

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If Smart were to list, there would be massive switching from TEL to Smart, since that is where all the growth comes from, but there would be an extra stock to attract desperately needed foreign funds. At present, TEL gets large dividends from Smart, 70 percent of its net profit, and for 2003, it received P1 billion. In 2004, 2005 and 2006, it expects ever-increasing dividends, which will help reduce its substantial dollar debt, a big liability when the peso keeps hitting new lows.

So, TEL is in no hurry to part with 30 percent of Smart. This would be expected to bring in $600 million based on current profits but if these are going to expand for another three years, as the company seems to think, then by delaying the IPO, the stake should produce a higher price. This, together with future dividends, would go a long way to wiping out TEL's dollar exposure and enable the core business to become profitable. So the company is in no hurry to comply.

An interesting question is when Smart should go public. If both TEL and Globe see another three years expansion before saturation occurs, then it would be better for Smart to have an IPO in 2006 because it could still forecast a further increase in subscribers. It would therefore still be a growth stock and command a reasonable P/E ratio. If it waits until it reaches a plateau, it would be rated as an income stock with a lower P/E rating. Of course, the telecom companies may be able to push the saturation date back further.

One question, which was answered, was that Piltel is not to be used as the backdoor listing vehicle for Smart. Last Tuesday, when the shares rose to P1.84, I wrote in my newsletter that the degree of risk had reached 98.5 and that the situation looked dangerous, my exact words. Within two days, the shares had fallen to P1.32.

Despite the fact that the directors have stated categorically that Piltel will not be used for backdoor listing, I expect frequent run-ups in the stock as rumors circulate again. A good trading stock. Incidentally, there was virtually no foreign interest, just the local brokers trying to outwit each other. Obviously, it makes sense for Smart to use Piltel's huge tax losses provided some arrangement can be worked out. Otherwise, it will take Piltel a very long time to become equity positive.

The other interesting stock was SMPH. It has been just about the worst performing blue chip over the past month, never participating in market rallies. Almost every foreign broker has been selling it and it fell back to its P5.90 support level.

On Thursday morning, there were 9 million sellers at P5.90 and there was a cross sale of 112 million shares by REGIS. I reckoned this was the end of the selling but first trade on Friday morning, REGIS crossed another 42 million shares. This seemed to clear the air and there was no sign of the remaining 7 million sellers at the previous close. Instead, there were 4 million buyers at P6 and only few sellers at P6.10. The results are due next month so hopefully the shares will rise, but there is strong overhead resistance at P6.50. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

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SM FAIRVIEW Basement 418-75-40
SM NORTH EDSA Car Park Plaza 453-3326
SM SOUTHMALL Basement 802-15-65
ROBINSONS GALLERIA Basement 635-5061
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BSP probes banks' . . .

From page B1

ability to hold these securities to maturity. Such investments are measured at amortized cost where any realized gains or losses shall be included in reported current income.

Meanwhile, Reyes said the BSP would issue a new circular reminding banks that if they would sell foreign exchange other than for trade purposes, they could not credit these to foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs).

If they sold dollars for trade purposes, Reyes said the BSP would allow them to credit to FCDUs for three days provided that there would be a waiver on secrecy privileges so that examiners could check whether the purchases were indeed for trade transactions.

This was in line with earlier suspicions that some dollar hoarders might be circumventing limits on dollar purchases using FCDUs.

Another circular to be issued by the BSP pertains to documentation requirements on L/Cs.

Reyes said examiners were currently given only a duplicate copy of L/Cs used to cover import requirements. The BSP will now require these duplicate copies to be notarized so that it could run after those who may abuse the facility.

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Sheer Driving Pleasure
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If you've ever dreamed of trading in your car for **a brand new BMW, with no cash out**, now is your chance to make your dream come true. Until February 29, 2004, PGA Cars BMW EDSA will accept your year 2000 (or newer) car, SUV, or van of any brand as trade-in for a brand new BMW. Depending on the appraised value of your vehicle, you can drive away with a brand new BMW of your choice with no cash out, and for as low as P14,567 a month. Prices for all BMW models will increase on March 1, 2004, so act now and make your dreams come true. **This special trade-in offer is available only at PGA Cars BMW EDSA. For inquiries, please call our hotline number at 727-0101.**

PGA Cars BMW
201 EDSA, Mandaluyong City
Hotline (02) 727 0101

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 24, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	8,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	33,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50.5	50.5	48.5	48.5	1,389,700
China Banking Corp.	675	675	675	675	39,890
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41	41	40	40	28,000
Export And Ind. Bank Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.51	1,100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	25.5	26	749,000
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24	24	68,400
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	300
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27	27	12,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1950	1950	1950	1950	940
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.32	650,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1475	1475	1475	1475	520
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	1,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.72	1,380,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	925	925	870	880	69,820
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.048	0.047	0.047	9,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.041	0.041	0.04	0.04	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	24,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.44	1.46	11,490,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	865	865	815	815	298,520
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	21,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20	20	19	19.25	212,500
Manila Electric Co. B	34	34	31.5	31.5	1,955,600
Petron Corp.	3	3	2.7	2.8	5,470,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.96	0.98	0.98	0.98	120,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	383,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	22,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	34,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	83,900
Swift Food Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	56.5	56	56.5	64,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	71	69	70	698,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	450,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6	6	5.5	5.5	9,485,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	48,000
APC Group Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	56,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.8	9.7	8.8	9.7	4,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.67	0.68	0.64	0.64	2,850,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,530,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	246,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.5	23.5	22.25	22.25	522,800
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	2,440,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	10,960,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	41,700
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	7.2	7.5	7.2	7.5	44,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	1,100,000
Pryce Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	280,000
Manila Jockey Club	11	11	11	11	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	23.5	23.5	138,700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	4,669,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.225	1,860,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	14,020,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	850,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Primex Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	50,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	80,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	16,574,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1	1	1	1	30,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	760,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	900,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	26,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	3,740,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	15,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	3,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	4,080,050	122,908,275.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	143,606,140	548,456,630.00
PRO	39,103,000	143,704,150.00
Mining	36,430,000	2,290,500.00
OIL	18,000,000	54,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	241,219,190	817,413,555.00

AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	453.94	DOWN 13.39
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,194.56	DOWN 98.40
PRO	553.40	DOWN 19.39
Mining	1,524.57	DOWN 32.99
OIL	1.30	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	922.40	DOWN 15.52
Composite	1,447.05	DOWN 61.25

NO. OF ADVANCES: 8; NO. OF DECLINES: 51; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 26; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 85; NO. OF TRADES: 2,557

DISCLOSURES

AYALA Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on March 26, 9 a.m. at the Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders' of record as of Feb. 9 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BANKARD Inc. announced the appointment of Zenaida Torres as chief financial officer of the company.

* * *

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 20, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of March 19 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ROBINSONS Land Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 22, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of March 23 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

CROWN Equities Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 27 to June 29 with record date on March 30.

* * *

ELECTED officers of **Central Azucarera de Tarlac** were Pedro Cojuangco, president and chair; Josephine Reyes, vice president and treasurer; Jose Cojuangco Jr., VP; Ernesto Teopaco, VP; Nereo Mendoza, assistant vice president and assistant treasurer; Emmanuel Cochico, AVP; Arcadio Lopez, secretary and Fernando Cojuangco, assistant secretary. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 24, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.796559	1.000000	55.2420
Japan	Yen	0.007353	0.009231	0.5099
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487335	1.867200	103.1479
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102424	0.128583	7.1032
Switzerland	Franc	0.633698	0.795545	43.9475
Canada	Dollar	0.596137	0.748391	41.3426
Singapore	Dollar	0.469669	0.589623	32.5720
Australia	Dollar	1.032213	1.295840	71.5848
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.113001	2.652661	146.5383
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212422	0.266674	14.7316
Brunei	Dollar	0.455828	0.572246	31.6120
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000119	0.0066
Thailand	Baht	0.020300	0.025484	1.4078
UAE	Dirham	0.216881	0.272272	15.0408
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.255400	69.3508
Argentina	Peso	0.272561	0.342173	18.9023
Brazil	Real	0.269199	0.337952	18.6691
Denmark	Kroner	0.134214	0.168492	9.3078
India	Rupee	0.017603	0.022099	1.2208
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209649	0.263193	14.5393
Mexico	New Peso	0.072185	0.090621	5.0061
New Zealand	Dollar	1.167290	1.465416	80.9525
Norway	Kroner	0.113755	0.142808	7.8890
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013923	0.017479	0.9656
South Africa	Rand	0.120326	0.151057	8.3447
Korea	Won	0.000675	0.000848	0.0468
Sweden	Kroner	0.108696	0.136457	7.5382
Syria	Pound	0.015467	0.019417	1.0726
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023978	0.030102	1.6629
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000416	0.000522	0.0288

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BUSINESS
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2004

Lots to TEL about PLDT

MR. BEARBULL

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If Smart were to list, there would be massive switching from TEL to Smart, since that is where all the growth comes from, but there would be an extra stock to attract desperately needed foreign funds. At present, TEL gets large dividends from Smart, 70 percent of its net profit, and for 2003, it received P1 billion. In 2004, 2005 and 2006, it expects ever-increasing dividends, which will help reduce its substantial dollar debt, a big liability when the peso keeps hitting new lows.

So, TEL is in no hurry to part with 30 percent of Smart. This would be expected to bring in $600 million based on current profits but if these are going to expand for another three years, as the company seems to think, then by delaying the IPO, the stake should produce a higher price. This, together with future dividends, would go a long way to wiping out TEL's dollar exposure and enable the core business to become profitable. So the company is in no hurry to comply.

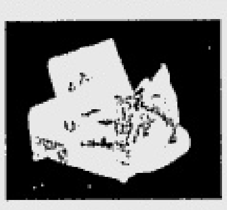
An interesting question is when Smart should go public. If both TEL and Globe see another three years expansion before saturation occurs, then it would be better for Smart to have an IPO in 2006 because it could still forecast a further increase in subscribers. It would therefore still be a growth stock and command a reasonable P/E ratio. If it waits until it reaches a plateau, it would be rated as an income stock with a lower P/E rating. Of course, the telecom companies may be able to push the saturation date back further.

One question, which was answered, was that Piltel is not to be used as the backdoor listing vehicle for Smart. Last Tuesday, when the shares rose to P1.84, I wrote in my newsletter that the degree of risk had reached 98.5 and that the situation looked dangerous, my exact words. Within two days, the shares had fallen to P1.32.

Despite the fact that the directors have stated categorically that Piltel will not be used for backdoor listing, I expect frequent run-ups in the stock as rumors circulate again. A good trading stock. Incidentally, there was virtually no foreign interest, just the local brokers trying to outwit each other. Obviously, it makes sense for Smart to use Piltel's huge tax losses provided some arrangement can be worked out. Otherwise, it will take Piltel a very long time to become equity positive.

The other interesting stock was SMPH. It has been just about the worst performing blue chip over the past month, never participating in market rallies. Almost every foreign broker has been selling it and it fell back to its P5.90 support level.

On Thursday morning, there were 9 million sellers at P5.90 and there was a cross sale of 112 million shares by REGIS. I reckoned this was the end of the selling but first trade on Friday morning, REGIS crossed another 42 million shares. This seemed to clear the air and there was no sign of the remaining 7 million sellers at the previous close. Instead, there were 4 million buyers at P6 and only few sellers at P6.10. The results are due next month so hopefully the shares will rise, but there is strong overhead resistance at P6.50. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*



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BSP probes banks' . . .

From page B1

ability to hold these securities to maturity. Such investments are measured at amortized cost where any realized gains or losses shall be included in reported current income.

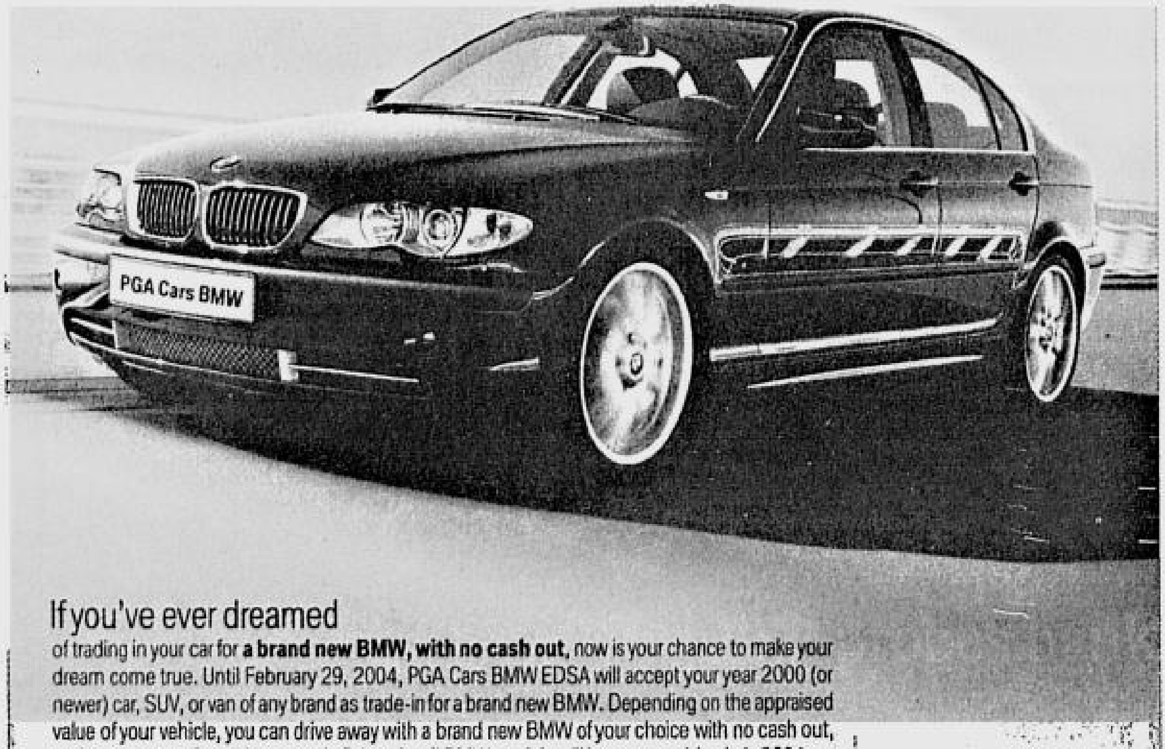
Meanwhile, Reyes said the BSP would issue a new circular reminding banks that if they would sell foreign exchange other than for trade purposes, they could not credit these to foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs).

If they sold dollars for trade purposes, Reyes said the BSP would allow them to credit to FCDUs for three days provided that there would be a waiver on secrecy privileges so that examiners could check whether the purchases were indeed for trade transactions.

This was in line with earlier suspicions that some dollar hoarders might be circumventing limits on dollar purchases using FCDUs.

Another circular to be issued by the BSP pertains to documentation requirements on L/Cs.

Reyes said examiners were currently given only a duplicate copy of L/Cs used to cover import requirements. The BSP will now require these duplicate copies to be notarized so that it could run after those who may abuse the facility.



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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 24, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	8,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	33,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50.5	50.5	48.5	48.5	1,389,700
China Banking Corp.	675	675	675	675	39,890
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41	41	40	40	28,000
Export And Ind. Bank Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.51	1,100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	25.5	26	749,000
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24	24	66,400
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	300
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27	27	12,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1950	1950	1950	1950	940
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.32	650,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1475	1475	1475	1475	520
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	1,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.72	1,380,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	925	925	870	880	69,820
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.048	0.047	0.047	9,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.041	0.041	0.04	0.04	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	24,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.44	1.46	11,490,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	865	865	815	815	298,520
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	21,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20	20	19	19.25	212,500
Manila Electric Co. B	34	34	31.5	31.5	1,955,600
Petron Corp.	3	3	2.7	2.8	5,470,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	120,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	383,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	22,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	34,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	83,900
Swift Food Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	56.5	56	56.5	64,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	71	69	70	698,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	450,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6	6	5.5	5.5	9,485,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	48,000
APC Group Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	56,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.8	9.7	8.8	9.7	4,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.67	0.68	0.64	0.64	2,850,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	100,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,530,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	246,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.5	23.5	22.25	22.25	522,800
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	2,440,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	10,960,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	100,000
South China Resources Inc	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
SPI Technologies Inc	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	41,700
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp	7.2	7.5	7.2	7.5	44,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	1,100,000
Pryce Corp	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	280,000
Manila Jockey Club	11	11	11	11	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	23.5	23.5	138,700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	4,669,000
Cyber Bay Corp	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.225	1,860,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	14,020,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	850,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Primex Corp	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	50,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	80,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	16,574,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1	1	1	1	30,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	760,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	900,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	26,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	3,740,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	15,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	3,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc.	4,080,050	122,908,275.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	143,606,140	548,456,630.00
PRO	39,103,000	143,704,150.00
Mining	36,430,000	2,290,500.00
OIL	18,000,000	54,000.00
GRAND TOTALS:	241,219,190	817,413,555.00

AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc.	453.94	DOWN 13.39
Comm'l & Ind'l.	2,194.56	DOWN 98.40
PRO	553.40	DOWN 19.39
Mining	1,524.57	DOWN 32.99
OIL	1.30	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	922.40	DOWN 15.52
Composite	1,447.05	DOWN 61.25

NO. OF ADVANCES: 8; NO. OF DECLINES: 51; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 26; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 85; NO. OF TRADES: 2,557

DISCLOSURES

AYALA Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on March 26, 9 a.m. at the Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders' of record as of Feb. 9 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BANKARD Inc. announced the appointment of Zenaida Torres as chief financial officer of the company.

* * *

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 20, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of March 19 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ROBINSONS Land Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 22, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of March 23 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

CROWN Equities Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 27 to June 29 with record date on March 30.

* * *

ELECTED officers of **Central Azucarera de Tarlac** were Pedro Cojuangco, president and chair; Josephine Reyes, vice president and treasurer; Jose Cojuangco Jr., VP; Ernesto Teopaco, VP; Nereo Mendoza, assistant vice president and assistant treasurer; Emmanuel Cochico, AVP; Arcadio Lopez, secretary and Fernando Cojuangco, assistant secretary. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

February 24, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.796559	1.000000	55.2420
Japan	Yen	0.007353	0.009231	0.5099
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487335	1.867200	103.1479
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102424	0.128583	7.1032
Switzerland	Franc	0.633698	0.795545	43.9475
Canada	Dollar	0.596137	0.748391	41.3426
Singapore	Dollar	0.469669	0.589623	32.5720
Australia	Dollar	1.032213	1.295840	71.5848
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.113001	2.652661	146.5383
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212422	0.266674	14.7316
Brunei	Dollar	0.455828	0.572246	31.6120
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000119	0.0066
Thailand	Baht	0.020300	0.025484	1.4078
UAE	Dirham	0.216881	0.272272	15.0408
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.255400	69.3508
Argentina	Peso	0.272561	0.342173	18.9023
Brazil	Real	0.269199	0.337952	18.6691
Denmark	Kroner	0.134214	0.168492	9.3078
India	Rupee	0.017603	0.022099	1.2208
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209649	0.263193	14.5393
Mexico	New Peso	0.072185	0.090621	5.0061
New Zealand	Dollar	1.167290	1.465416	80.9525
Norway	Kroner	0.113755	0.142808	7.8890
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013923	0.017479	0.9656
South Africa	Rand	0.120326	0.151057	8.3447
Korea	Won	0.000675	0.000848	0.0468
Sweden	Kroner	0.108696	0.136457	7.5382
Syria	Pound	0.015467	0.019417	1.0726
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023978	0.030102	1.6629
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000416	0.000522	0.0288

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Sister act

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IT LOOKS like Banco Filipino vice chair Albert "Bobby" Aguirre is content to let women lead his fight against his sister Nanette.

According to the grapevine, Bobby was a no-show at the start of the daily hearings Monday of the foreclosure case he himself filed against Nanette in Seattle. Bobby has so far managed to dodge attempts by Nanette's lawyers to make him appear during the pretrial hearings at the Seattle District Court.

Instead, the polo-playing playboy sent his very pregnant half-sister, Kathy Aguirre-Hernandez, and his congresswoman-executive, Ma. Amelita "Girlie" Villarosa of the violence-ridden district of Occidental Mindoro, to lead the judicial attack against Nanette.

Kathy, five months in the family way, even had a vomit bag by her side, in full view of the jury, according to an eyewitness.

Channel 5 diaspora

THE PARKING problem and/or the high cost of acquiring parking spaces are throwing a monkey wrench into the plan of Antonio Cojuangco Jr., new owner of Channel 5, to transfer the station's news and public affairs department from the wilds of Novaliches to the heart of the country's business district.

According to the grapevine, TonyBoy's initial choice, Bankmer building on Ayala Avenue, could not provide the 160-180 parking slots that Channel 5 wanted for its revitalized news and public affairs department.

Bankmer is a natural choice for Cojuangco since it is just next door to the Bank of Commerce Building, where the telecom-now-aspiring-media tycoon has an office as a bank director.

Getting long-term leases for parking slots at the nearby De la Rosa carpark has been ruled out as too expensive by the suddenly parsimonious billionaire, according to the grapevine.

The word now is that TonyBoy is looking at a couple of buildings on Jupiter Street, including the now vacant PLDT warehouse building.

While the lease rates on the abandoned PLDT building might be closer to the ground, the property is giving bad vibes since it is just too near a hallowed ground: It is right next to the South Cemetery, separated only by a hollow-block wall.

Going out

EQUITABLE PCIBank director Frank Go looks like he is really getting rid of his personal shareholdings in the family-controlled bank.

Go disclosed that he again had steadily disposed of his dwindling EPCIB stake in a series of stock market transactions early this month. The Go sellout began in earnest right after the surprise New Year announcement from the Social Security System that it had agreed to dispose of its key shareholding within EPCIB to taipan Henry Sy.

At the last count, Go, elder brother of EPCIB president Antonio Go, said that his personal stake in the bank was now worth less than P665,000.

The Gos would not comment on whether Frank's sellout was a reaction to the SSS-Sy deal, the latter deal being seen as a preliminary move to the merger and takeover of EPCIB by Sy's Banco de Oro.

Heard through the grapevine

AN anti-Fernando Poe Jr. CD is out, with the unnamed rock and roll band singing and playing all the nine songs sounding suspiciously similar to the anti-Erap CD that was also stealthily born during the impeachment hearings.

Supposedly produced by the "Panday Sira Productions" on "Natural Born Records," the FPJ songs started airing yesterday over at the dzRJ a.m. radio station, which should give further indication of the forces behind the CD's production.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

BIR open to compromise on tax row with SMC

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue said it was willing to reduce to less than a third the P880 million in back taxes that it was requiring San Miguel Corp. to pay if the food and beverage giant would ask for a compromise.

BIR Deputy Commissioner Jose Buñag said the BIR was willing to settle for P240 million in back taxes from the original P880 million that it assessed the beer-based conglomerate.

This indicated that the BIR was now taking a softer stance on the issue of the back taxes after realizing that a long-drawn court battle might only exhaust its time and energy without an assurance of getting any back taxes.

Earlier, the BIR said it was prepared for a legal battle with SMC if the company continued refusing to pay the back taxes. The BIR earlier said its management committee, a decision-making body composed of the revenue agency's top officials, had decided to require SMC to pay the P880 million in back taxes after concluding that SMC's San Mig Light brand is a variant.

The dispute between the BIR and SMC stemmed from the reclassification of the San Mig Light brand from being a separate brand to being a variant.

After its reclassification, San Mig Light is now charged a tax of P13.61 a liter from the previous P10.25. SMC currently pays under protest an excise tax based on the adjusted rate of P13.61.

The BIR said San Mig Light was a variant of the San Miguel Pale Pilsen brand and should therefore be imposed a higher tax. SMC, on the other hand, stressed that San Mig Light was not a variant but a separate brand.

The P880 million in back taxes covered the period beginning 1999, when San Mig Light was introduced in the local market.

Some tax experts said the BIR could have a hard time going after the back taxes now that SMC is paying the excise tax on its San Mig Light brand under protest. Citing a provision in the Tax Code, they said the BIR may not require SMC to pay the back taxes pending an appeal. The BIR should just offer a compromise, they said.

SMC earlier said it was preparing to question before the courts the reclassification of San Mig Light. The company argued that taxing San Mig Light as a variant would reverse the product's original registration and classification as a separate brand that the BIR itself approved in 1999. It cited a provision in the Tax Code that prohibited the modification of a tax ruling if the move would prejudice a taxpayer.

The BIR has been criticized for deciding to reclassify San Mig Light long after its registration in 1999. But the revenue agency said the Tax Code allowed the revenue agency to modify an erroneous tax ruling if it would affect its capability to collect proper taxes.

Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares earlier admitted that the BIR got the idea of studying San Mig Light for possible tax reclassification only after some of its personnel saw marketing posters for the product bearing the statement that it was a variant of the Pale Pilsen brand.

She said, however, that the reclassification was decided based on a thorough study by the bureau.

Exec says PAL to lease 13 planes

PHILIPPINE Airlines Inc. (PAL) is planning to lease 13 planes to replace its narrow-bodied aircraft in the next two to three years, the firm's president said yesterday.

"We are re-fleeting our narrow-bodied aircraft," Avelino Zapanta, who is also chief operating officer, told Reuters on the sidelines of an aviation conference in Singapore.

The flag carrier, which has 13 narrow-bodied planes in a fleet of 30, will make a decision before the end of the year, Zapanta said.

"We are now determining the type of aircraft that we will use as a replacement for the narrow-bodied aircraft. It's a choice between (Airbus) A320s and the new generation (Boeing) B737. Most will be on operating leases," said Zapanta.

Asia is expected to lead the growth in the aircraft leasing market this year due to the emergence of low-cost carriers, Singapore Aircraft Leasing Enterprise chief executive Robert Martin said.

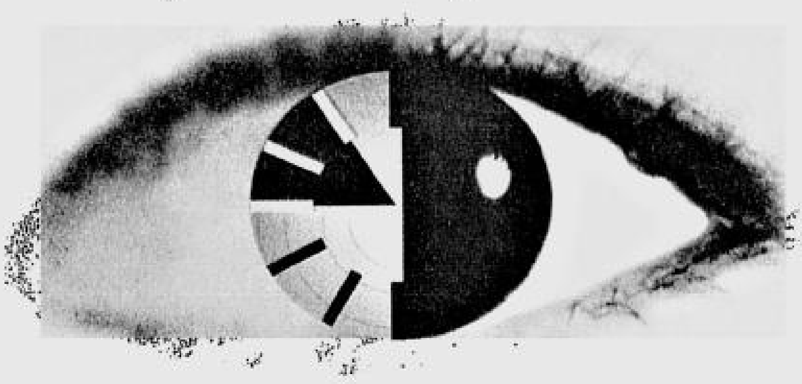
Rebounding passenger traffic earned PAL about P1 billion in December and January, putting it on track to break even for the full year, Zapanta said.

"We lost P1.6 billion in April-to-November. It was worrisome except that December and January proved to be good months. Passengers are hankering to travel," Zapanta added.

"We have two months left to recover about P590 million, to break even or be positive. I think it can be done," he said. The unlisted flag carrier's financial year runs to March.

Zapanta said that in December and January, PAL recovered about two-thirds of the P1.6 billion in losses it incurred in the April-

EXEC/B4



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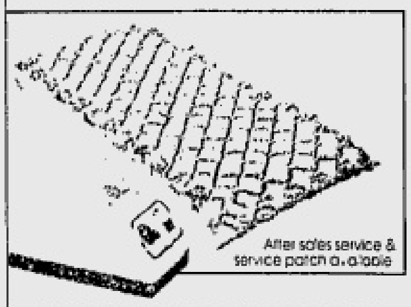

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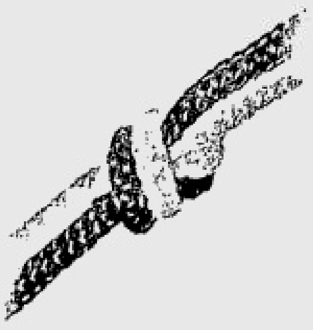

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DTI backs planned economic zone in Muslim Mindanao

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has thrown its support behind the plan to establish a Regional Economic Zone Authority in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the proposed Reza was in line with government efforts to boost economic development in the region.

Purisima added that the DTI was positioning ARMM as the jump-off point for exports to the Middle East.

"(Maybe) we could position the area as a the center for halal-certified products," he said.

Halal refers to goods that Muslims consider to have passed the dietary restrictions prescribed by Islam.

"The halal product market is worth about $250 billion worldwide," Purisima said.

"Securing even a small portion of that market would be good for the region and the country," he added.

He said there was a potential venture in exporting chicken—processed as halal—to the Middle East.

The ARMM legislature recently approved the plan to put up the Reza and Purisima said the DTI was fully behind the proposal.

"(DTI officials) have met with Regional Secretary Ishak Mastura who is my counterpart in ARMM," he said.

"This needs final approval from Congress, but we will work closely with them so that they can have the technical assistance they need," he added.

Purisima added: "The (Reza) is a good initiative to develop the ARMM. In fact, there are some exporting companies operating in the region."

He cited the partnership between Paglas Corp. and La Frutera Inc. in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao, which he said was doing well in the export of bananas to the Middle East.

Industry data showed that the banana company committed to invest $50 million for the expansion of its other plantations in Lanao del Sur, also in ARMM.

"The region is also host to a thriving textile industry and as a potential source of carrageenan (which is used to process food, beverage and frozen confections)," Purisima said.

He explained that the Reza would function like the Philippine Economic Zone Authority. "The Reza would identify the areas that can be economic zones," he said.

He said the Reza could give to investors the same incentives given by the Peza. But it could also devise its own incentives since the the ARMM is autonomous.

PNOC seen raising ₱1.3B from share sale

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STATE-RUN Philippine National Oil Co. expects to raise at least P1.3 billion from the sale of its 51-percent stake in real estate subsidiary PNOC Development and Management Corp. (PDMC).

In a news briefing yesterday, PDMC finance and administration manager Florendo Garcia Jr. said the sale will involve around 35 million shares.

Garcia said four firms have already expressed interest in purchasing PNOC's majority stake in PDMC.

PNOC declined to identify the interested firms but described one firm as being involved in real property development while another is into transportation.

PDMC is currently on the lookout for a financial advisor to facilitate the sale.

Proposals need to be in by 2 p.m. of March 22. Evaluation will start soon after.

Garcia said three firms expressed their intent to bid for the financial advisory contract, including First Metro Investment Corp. and PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

The financial advisor should make some adjustments on the valuation, which would likely jack up the price of PNOC's PDMC stake.

He said a financial advisor would be chosen by next month, with a final valuation expected by July.

The information memorandum would then be issued to prospective strategic investors by September. Negotiations would likely take place within the fourth quarter.

The deal would then be closed before year's end, he said.

After letting go of its 51-percent share in PDMC, PNOC would then offer 10 percent of its real estate arm to the public.

This will be done either through an initial public offering or sale to small investors, said PDMC president and chief executive Cayetano Paderanga Jr.

He said PNOC would be left owning about 35 percent of PDMC.

"The idea is to change it into a private company, but with enough government presence to influence policies," he said.

ABS-CBN taps foreign marts

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. moves to widen its reach by offering programs to new markets in Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America this year.

ABS-CBN was encouraged to go after these markets by the success two years ago of forays into other Asian countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei.

In a statement, ABS-CBN International Sales and Distribution director Reena de Guzman Garingan said the network was starting to earn a reputation as a program supplier.

It has already exported two of its drama series, "The Promise (Pangako sa Iyo)" and "From the Heart (Mula sa Puso)" to Malaysia and Indonesia.

ABS-CBN said Malaysia's networks RTM and Astro Ria Channel as well as TVRI and ANTV in Indonesia aired "The Promise" dubbed and subtitled in Bahasa Melayu and Bahasa Indonesia.

"The Long Wait" will be aired in March in another Malaysian TV station.

Kenya's Free TV network, meanwhile, may air its first Asian series, "The Promise," also next month in English.

ABS-CBN also plans to dub one of its series in French to cater to French-speaking Africans.

Garingan noted that the entry of Mexican telenovelas and Chinese series in local television allowed the network to export its series to the global market.

ABS-CBN also plans to export its programs to India, China and other Mandarin-speaking countries, as well as Eastern Europe and Latin America.

ABS-CBN is particularly focused on India, one of Asia's biggest markets, as it is looking at forging a partnership with one of the largest production houses in India.

Garingan said the company offered a drama anthology which would suit the Indian market. The deal has yet to be concluded.

The network exports its locally produced soap operas through licensing agreements with program buyers and free and pay TV networks.

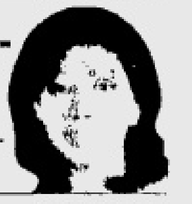
For the first nine months of last year, ABS-CBN reported a net profit of P888.8 million. For the third quarter alone, the net income surged by 131 percent to P381.8 million from the previous year.

The company's solid performance was mainly attributed to the continued recovery of advertising spending and the steady expansion of international revenues.

Mindanao: Can we swim with the sharks?

MINDANA-WORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian



"WE must learn to swim with the sharks—or drown in the rising tide of globalization"—former President Fidel V. Ramos.

One major challenge for us in Mindanao is to be truly aware of the on-going programs in the global scene, and to make sure that we have a voice in all of these. Only then will we be able to truly protect our interests and move toward the realization of our own objectives.

With respect to the World Trade Organization, we must not lose time in making our position known to the Departments of Trade and Agriculture and the other Philippine representatives in the WTO talks, especially on the issues of export subsidies, price control and market access.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, on the other hand, is voluntary and consensual, but we are faced with a timetable in the Apec leaders' agreement in Indonesia, that by 2010, there would be free trade among the developed countries, and by 2020 for all the countries, including the underdeveloped ones.

The Asean is more an opportunity as it delves in regional trade. The Asean's efforts to link with other countries like China, Australia, and other countries are opportunities that Mindanao must not miss.

The Mindanao business community already made some headway into China, initiatives that we must now build on. We must do the same with the other countries knowing full well that the Asean shall be providing the institutional mechanisms to link with them.

BIMP-Eaga

We have an advantage and an opportunity in the BIMP-Eaga. As the inner ring in the concentric circles of cooperation, the BIMP-Eaga, aside from being a sub-regional cooperation in itself, prepares us for the outer rings, like the Asean, Apec and so forth.

The challenge in the BIMP-Eaga is how to really make it thrive and bring forth more economic momentum. It's high time that the the BIMP-Eaga should slowly wean itself away from government coddling.

It is now up to the Mindanao business community to optimize and nurture it.

The disbursement rate for Official Development Assistance (ODA) has remarkably improved in 2003, already hitting 95 percent for the first nine months of the year compared to 74 percent and 76 percent in 2001 and 2002, respectively, according to Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo L. Neri.

Assuming that this is a national trend, then we can say that Mindanao has improved its absorptive capacity. Last year was a year of setting up mechanisms, like the Mindanao Working Group (under the supervision of the Neda and Mindanao Economic Development Council), rationalizing project implementation and trying out systems like the Convergence Strategy to really improve our ODA absorptive capacity.

Now why is this pertinent to the topic at hand? Because recently, the donor community has trained its sights on BIMP-Eaga work for technical and financial assistance. Therefore, in our efforts to be globally competitive, we now have an additional pillar in the form of ODAs.

Areas to address

I am sure that we can think of several areas that need attention in relation to our endeavor for a globally competitive Mindanao. Allow me to highlight some:

1. SME Development

While globalization has created new opportunities such as wider markets for trade, larger private capital inflows and improved access to technology, it has also brought about tough challenges.

The rapid changes caused by globalization may just favor the more agile. Small firms might enjoy certain advantages over large competitors as they have greater flexibility in responding to changing opportunities, or the ability to serve small specialized niche markets.

In the case of Mindanao, however, the MSMEs (micro small and medium enterprises) are late entrants and are therefore at a disadvantage compared to well-entrenched competitors in their own countries such as those from Luzon and Visayas.

The potential of MSMEs as catalysts for countryside industrialization has been stymied because of the formidable external and internal barriers that hamper their development.

2. Policy reforms

Policy reforms will also have to be instituted to encourage the efficient use and management of the island's human resources. This, in turn, will remove the constraints and bottlenecks that impede the vast majority's access to productive resources and social services.

Specific to trade policy, the business sector has been very innovative in promoting Mindanao products. For instance, the government pushed for incentives to promote the halal industry, including the establishment of certification standards to enable Mindanao to have a niche in the $150-billion international halal market.

Mindanao is also taking Customs, Immigration, Quarantine, and Security (or CIQS) harmonization a step further by going into bilateral port-to-port negotiations with its EAGA counterparts.

3. Human resources and skills development

The role of formal and technical/vocational education and the training system in the overall development strategy of the island will have to be redefined to effectively harness the strengths and potentials of Mindanao.

An important factor that affects both the national business environment and company operations and strategy is human resources development through high quality vocational education.

Accordingly, in many countries with poor indices of competitiveness, human resources development is based on a supply-oriented approach where providers of education and training determine the content, availability and eligibility for services.

In Mindanao, along with the rest of the country, we are gradually moving toward an industry-driven approach. For instance, we managed to include Mindanao in the Philippines-Australia Quality Technical Vocational Education and Training, or PAQTVET program, which aims, among others, to develop industry-based skills standards, curricula for key industries and industry working groups.

These will serve as a mechanism to ensure an industry-driven Tech-Voc educational system.

These are but a few of the very important key areas that will require critical action from all the key players and stakeholders to ensure that we in Mindanao can really have our place side by side with the sharks.

I will be discussing the other areas of concern in my next column. But for now, we must avoid being devoured by the "sharks" at all costs.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is the former chair of the Mindanao Business Council and is a respected business leader. She remains to be a strong advocate and voice for Mindanao development)

Exec says PAL to lease 13 planes

From page B3

to-November period, when the deadly SARS outbreak and a rise in fuel prices hit the carrier.

He said the bird flu virus that has hit Asia was unlikely to affect demand for travel. "I think the attitude of the traveller now is that bird flu or no bird flu, they will just go and travel."

The airline originally targeted a profit of P816 million this year, up from P295 million in the previous year before the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) hit travel.

PAL is controlled by local business tycoon Lucio Tan and his companies. The government holds a 4-percent stake.

The airline was on the brink of liquidation in 1999 after a series of labor crises, but is now revamping its operations to settle large outstanding debts.

PAL's current debt is less than $1.5 billion, down from $2.3 billion in 1999, Zapanta said.

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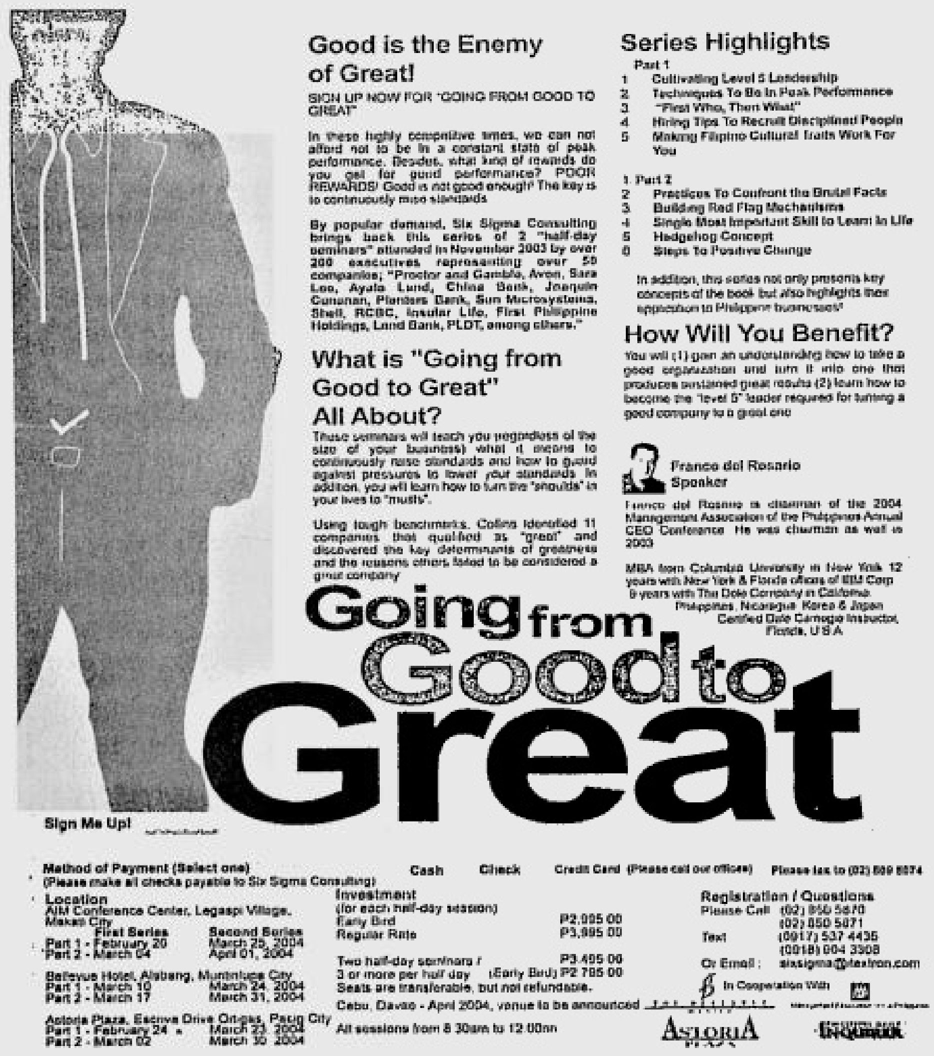

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Speaker
Franco del Rosario is chairman of the 2004 Management Association of the Philippines Annual CEO Conference. He was chairman as well in 2003
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BOI moves to maintain perks for mining ventures

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments is set to review the 2004 Investments Priorities Plan to look for ways that will allow the government to continue extending incentives to mining projects without violating the Constitution, Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima said.

Purisima's announcement was made as he affirmed the Department of Trade and Industry's continuing support for the local mining industry.

In a press briefing, he said the BOI was working on amending the IPP, the list of government-preferred investment activities, to ensure that mining projects would continue to enjoy incentives provided by Executive Order 226 or the Omnibus Investments Code.

Purisima said the move was prompted by a recently issued Supreme Court decision that essentially ruled out the IPP listing of mining ventures under the Mining Act of 1995.

BOI executive director Elmer Hernandez, in a speech before the 2004 Mining Conference held earlier, explained that mining projects could be kept in the IPP on the basis of certain provisions of Executive Order 226 or the Omnibus Investments Code.

Article 2 of the first chapter of the order provides that the "state shall encourage private Filipino and foreign investments in industry, agriculture, forestry, mining and others." Article 17 of the same chapter, Hernandez said, defined pioneer projects as those undertaken in the areas of agriculture, industry and mining.

At present, he said, mining activities were in the IPP under mandatory listing on the basis of a provision of Republic Act No. 7942, which, however, was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

The 2004 IPP was approved by the President last Feb. 18 through Memorandum Order 136.

In the meantime, Purisima said the DTI would create mining assistance centers in provinces with rich mineral deposits to facilitate investment inquiries and activities.

On Monday, Purisima told the Management Association of the Philippines that the Supreme Court ruling covered financial and technical assistance agreements (FTAAs) between the government and private investors.

"Despite the ruling, we can still have mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) and they are still valid," he added.

Peso should be trading at 53-54 to $1–Buenaventura

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday said the peso should be trading at about 53-54 to US$1 at present were it not for the political uncertainties arising from the coming May elections.

The BSP chief, in a television interview yesterday, assured the public that the volatility in the foreign exchange market was "under control." He added that there was no urgent need yet to siphon off more liquidity from the financial system.

Buenaventura said the BSP would not drain its gross international reserves in order to defend the local currency.

He said the country was paying a hefty premium to the prevailing political uncertainties, which were aggravating pressures on the peso. Yesterday, the peso closed firmer at 56.24 to $1 from Monday's 56.255.

He explained that the first quarter was a weak season for the peso due to slow portfolio investment inflows and overseas remittances.

"Until we regain confidence, we'll see continued volatility," Buenaventura said.

"We've taken out excess liquidity and we may take out some more but we don't think it is necessary at this point," he said.

On Monday, the BSP chief said the institution could raise the reserve requirement imposed on banks to as high as 30 percent from the existing 19 percent if needed.

Of the existing 19 percent reserve requirement, 9 percent represents statutory reserve or those parked with the BSP for minimal interest while 10 percent is liquidity reserve or the portion required to be placed in liquid and market-yielding instruments.

The reserve requirement covers peso demand, savings, time deposit and deposit substitutes of commercial banks as well as peso-denominated common trust funds and other fiduciary activities.

The BSP chief said the institution was closely monitoring banks' foreign exchange trading activities so that "they will not "succumb to temptations."

High prices lure more farmers to corn

RISING global corn prices are likely to prompt more Philippine farmers to shift to the grain in 2004, boosting production and cutting dependence on imports, a government official in charge of the corn crop said on Thursday.

High prices and a domestic supply shortage prompted the Philippine government recently to approve duty-free imports of 300,000 tons to 350,000 tons of the feed ingredient.

The country annually imports a million tons of the grain at duties ranging from 35 percent to 50 percent. "The price of corn is a very big factor now. The rise in world prices has affected local prices. More farmers might plant corn this year," Artemio Salazar, corn program director of the Department of Agriculture, said.

He predicted corn output could rise to 5 million tons in 2004 from 4.6 million tons last year as weather conditions for planting had so far remained favorable.

Corn shipments cost-and-freight (C&F) Southeast Asia have risen 60 percent in the last year.

Chinese corn was available a year ago at about $125 a ton but buyers now have to pay around $200 a ton for US corn given an absence of offers from China, where domestic stocks are falling.

This has pushed domestic prices in the Philippines up to around P9 a kilo from less than P7 last year, Salazar said.

Benchmark prices of corn on the Chicago Board of Trade reached a six-year high this month.

"The distribution of rainfall has been satisfactory. More farmers are using better seeds and technology," he said.

"Therefore, we are expecting a rise in output." The Philippines plants two crops a year—one in May and the other in October.

Salazar said the area under genetically modified corn, or Bt corn, could double in 2004 to about 30,000 hectares from 15,000 last year. Bt Corn was commercially planted for the first time last year.

"We are also expecting a big improvement in terms of Bt corn yields," Salazar said. "The farmers are happy since this variety does not have a disease problem." Last year, the average yield of Bt corn was four tons per hectare and Salazar said field tests in some areas had shown that the yield could be increased to up to seven tons per hectare.

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Telecom firms seek DOJ's help

By Clarissa S. Batino

TO DEFEND themselves from an anti-trust case being built up by the US government, local telecom carriers plan to invoke a presidential decree prohibiting vital industries from presenting documents that will jeopardize national interest.

However, the telecom firms will need to obtain first the nod of the Department of Justice before they can make the move.

National Telecommunications Commission Chair Ronald Solis yesterday said the justice department had to decide whether telecom qualifies as a vital industry.

"If the DOJ comes out with a favorable ruling, the government will then have to decide whether it will allow the carriers to submit the documents that they are being asked to submit," said Solis.

Presidential Decree 1718 aims to promote local industries and protect strategic businesses supporting the country's development agenda.

It provides that "any and all documents and information possessed by or in the custody of Philippine corporations, entities or individuals doing business in the pursuit of the national economic development programs of the government should not be utilized by any foreign person or government to the prejudice or detriment of said corporation."

Any industry declared as vital and crucial to national interest can only be compelled to submit evidence by any court or body if there is a clearance from Malacañang or the President's designated representative.

The US justice department last month served subpoenas to 30 Filipino telecom executives attending a conference in Hawaii requiring them to appear before a grand jury hearing a price-fixing case.

The executives were asked to bring with them vital documents during the inquiry of alleged anti-competitive behavior of local carriers.

The US action revived a dispute between American and Filipino telecom firms over termination rates, which are paid by domestic carriers for calls made through the networks of foreign carriers.

Allied Bank raising $50M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ALLIED Banking Corp. plans to raise $50 million in additional capital through dollar-denominated borrowings for its bank operations.

Sources said the planned borrowing, that would qualify as tier-2 capital or subordinated long-term debt, would translate to roughly P2.8 billion at the prevailing exchange rate.

The planned tier-2 offering will increase the bank's capital adequacy ratio—or a portion of the bank's capital expressed as a percentage of risk weighted credit exposure—to 15 percent from the current 13 percent, sources further said.

Allied Bank has tapped ING Bank N.V. as the financial adviser for the planned debt offering, even as it still awaits the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

The bank's capital stood at P8 billion.

Sources also said raising debt through a dollar issue might not be so worrisome in terms of borrowing costs since Allied Bank was spared a downgrade on its debt rating by rating firm Moody's Investors Service.

Moody's earlier lowered its credit ratings for seven local banks, to mirror the lower ratings for Philippine foreign denominated bonds and local government debt.

It kept a stable outlook for Allied Bank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank.

PacNet revenue up 6.7%

PACIFIC Internet Ltd. (PacNet) last year posted a 6.7-percent increase in revenue and a 67-percent rise in net income from year-ago level.

PacNet is one of Asia's largest independent Internet communications service providers, with presence in the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, India, Thailand and Malaysia.

In a statement, the company said its revenue last year grew to US$98.6 million, from $92.4 million a year ago, with earnings from broadband rising 60.7 percent to $39.4 million making it the biggest contributor to the company's total earnings.

In the fourth quarter, PacNet's revenue grew to $25.8 million, or 9.8 percent more than the level in the same quarter the previous year, with broadband revenue increasing by 49.7 percent to $11.2 million. Its net income during the period hit $1.9 million, or four times the $0.5 million in the previous quarter.

"PacNet will continue to leverage its broadband customer base and corporate clients that were built over the years to extend and strengthen its regional presence," said PacNet chair Ko Kheng Hwa.

With the migration to broadband access, dial-up revenue last year dropped by 18.2 from year-ago.

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PEOPLE *at* WORK

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Architects transform drawing to reality

By Candy G. Villanueva

AT a pool table at the far end of the ACCI restaurant, two guys are deeply engrossed in a serious round of 9-Ball. In the business world, sometimes million-peso deals are closed while swinging a putt out in the greens. Here at the Architectural Center Club Inc. (ACCI), architects discuss projects over billiards.

At ACCI, architects, engineers, contractors and suppliers of the construction industry converge to do business, exchange trade secrets and establish networks. On some days, they simply come to unwind with a few bottles of beer or through singing with live accompaniment.

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PEOPLE at WORK

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo**
Subsection Editor **Regina Galang Reyes**

Architects transform drawing to reality

By Candy G. Villanueva

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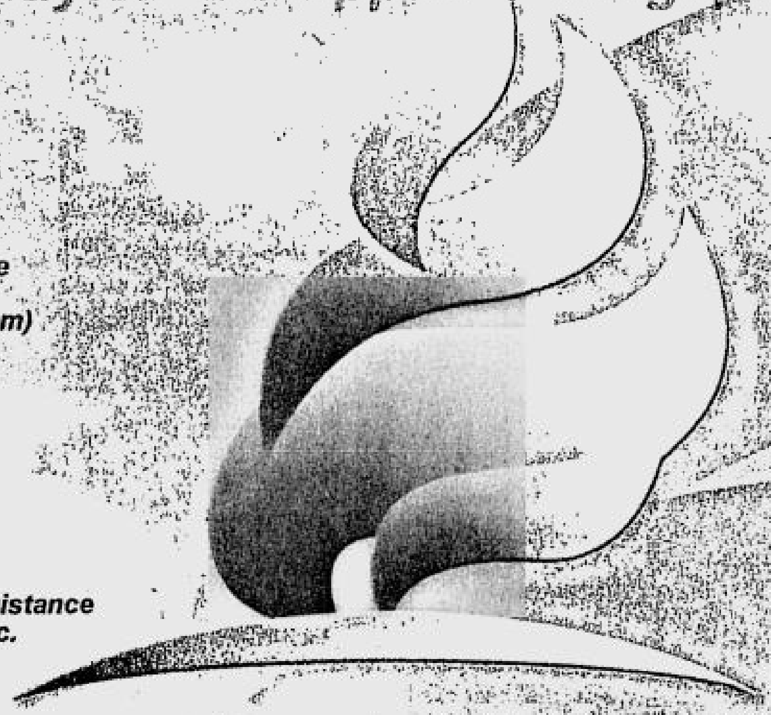

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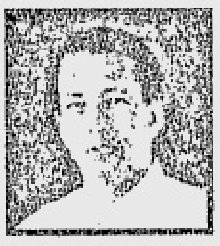

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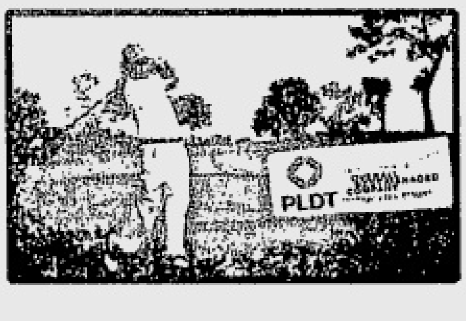

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12 WATER DEMON

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 DUPLEX
2 U-BELT
3 MILAN
4 KUYA

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 RING: THE SPIRAL
2 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
3 LOST IN TRANSLATION
4 BONE SNATCHER
5 DUPLEX
6 RUNAWAY JURY
7 U-BELT
8 KUYA
9 MILAN
10 GHOSTHOUSE
11 COLD MOUNTAIN
12 WATER DEMON

SM CITY DAVAO
2976598

1 CHASING LIBERTY
2 MAGIC KITCHEN
3 MILAN
4 MEMENTO MORI
5 DUPLEX
6 HAUNTED MANSION

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 KUYA
2 DUPLEX
3 CHASING LIBERTY
4 21 GRAMS
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 MILAN

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7106977-80

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 WISHING STAIRS
3 MILAN
4 CHASING LIBERTY

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

2 DUPLEX
11:05 FS/11:20 MF/1:15/3:10/5:05/ 7:00/8:55/10:25LFS/ 11:00 LMF/12:30 END

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 MILAN	1 DUPLEX	ArtFilm 1 IN AMERICA 12:40, 2:45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 DUPLEX 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	THX 1 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE
2 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE	2 MILAN	2 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE 11:20, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50, 11:30	2 DUPLEX
3 DUPLEX	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 RUNAWAY JURY 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30	Cinestage REPERTORY'S FAME Feb.27, 28, 29, Mar. 6 & 7	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE - 2:35, 5:15 MILAN - 8:50, 11:20	3 MILAN
4 WATER DEMON	4 BONE SNATCHER		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 COLD MOUNTAIN 1:15, 4:20, 7:25, 10:30	4 RUNAWAY JURY
	5 CHASING LIBERTY		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 LOST IN TRANSLATION 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	5 LOST IN TRANSLATION
	6 SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE			
	7 SPIRAL			

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1 (DDS) MILAN
2 (SDDS) HAUNTED MANSION
3 (DTS) GHOST HOUSE
4 GOLD (DTS) SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
5 GOLD (DOLBY) COLD MOUNTAIN
6 GOLD (SDDS) DUPLEX
7 GOLD (DOLBY) RUN AWAY JURY
8 [illegible] KUYA
9 [illegible] WATER DEMON
10 [illegible] BONE SNATCHERS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) DUPLEX
2 (DOLBY) SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
3 (DOLBY) RUN AWAY JURY
4 (DOLBY) MILAN

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 U BELT
2 COLD MOUNTAIN
3 MILAN

starmall Movies
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(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 MILAN
2 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
3 WATER DEMON
COLD MOUNTAIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) U BELT
5

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 U BELT
2 WATER DEMON
3 KUYA
4 MILAN
5 HAUNTED MANSION
6 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1 RUN AWAY JURY
2 U BELT

PREMIERE CINEMA
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

THX

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 MONA LISA SMILE
2 MILAN

Sunshine
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1 U BELT
2
3
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

5 RESERVE
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 U BET
2 KUYA
3 MILAN
4 (SDDS) COLD MOUNTAIN
5 DUPLEX
6 (DOLBY) WATER DEMON
7 (DTS) GHOST HOUSE
8 GOOD LAWYERS WIFE
9

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 RESERVE
2 (SDDS)
3 (DTS)
4 (DOLBY)
5

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 NEW BLOOD
2 MILAN
3 (DTS) MAGIC KITCHEN
4 U BELT
5 (SDDS) HAUNTED MANSION

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 RESERVE

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1 U BELT
2 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
3 WATER DEMON
4 RESERVE

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1 (DOLBY) WATER DEMON
2 GHOST HOUSE
3 U BELT
4 DUPLEX
5 MILAN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 U BELT
2 WISHING STAIRS

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
MALL CINEPLEX 7

1 U BELT
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
4 (SDDS) COLD MOUNTAIN
5 (DTS) DUPLEX
6 KUYA / HAUNTED MANSION
7 WATER DEMON

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) CHASING LIBERTY
2 MILAN
3 (DTS ES) KUYA
4 TEXAS SHAINSAW MASSACRE

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) A TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
4 (DTS) CHASING LIBERTY

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 MILAN
2 KUYA
3 (DOLBY) HAUNTED OFFICE
4 (DTS) MONA LIZA

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1 KUYA
2 U BELT
3 (DTS) MILAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MILAN
2 (DTS) KUYA
3 (DOLBY) RUN AWAY JURY
4 TEXAS SHAINSAW MASSACRE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 MILAN
2 (DOLBY) HAUNTED OFFICE
3 (DTS) RUN AWAY JURY
4 KUYA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 MILAN
2 KUYA
3 (DOLBY) MONA LIZA SMILE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 MILAN
3 (DOLBY) A TALE OF TWO SISTERSS
4 (DTS) I AM DINA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1 A TALE OF TWO SISTERSS
2 MILAN
3 KUYA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) SABIK
2 UNDERWORLD
3 INTERNET QUEEN
4 (DTS) U BELT

Lianas MovieCity
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1 (DOLBY) RUN AWAY JURY
2 MAGIC KITCHEN
3 (DTS) MILAN
4 THE GATHERING
5 KUYA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 GOOD LAWYERS WIFE
2 MILAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 KUYA
2 MILAN
3 RUN AWAY JURY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 THE GRUDGE 1
3 (DTS) LAST SAMURAI
4 (DOLBY) MILAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS) RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 MILAN
2 RUN AWAY JURY
3 HAUNTED MANSION
4 KUYA

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 MILAN

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	UBELT
Ali 2	MILAN
Ali 3	SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE
Ali 4	COLD MOUNTAIN
Ali 5	DUPLEX
Ali 6	KUYA
Ali 7	WATER DEMON

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FEB 29	PBA: TALK N' TEXT VS. SHELL
MAR 1	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
MAR 3	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
MAR 6	BB. PILIPINAS CORONATION NIGHT
MAR 7	PBA: REDBULL VS. SHELL

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	U-BELT
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	U-BELT
B	BURLESK KING
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KUYA
CINEMA-2	U-BELT
CINEMA-3	MYSTIC RIVER (RI)
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HAUNTED MANSION
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	RUNAWAY JURY
CINEMA-6	CHASING LIBERTY
CINEMA-7	WISHING STAIRS
CINEMA-8	GUSTO KO SA LALAKI (RI)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DUPLEX
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	COLD MOUNTAIN
CINEMA-12	WATER DEMON
CINEMA-14	GHOST HOUSE
CINEMA-15	MILAN

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	MILAN
CINEMA-1	HAUNTED MANSION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-4	CLOSED

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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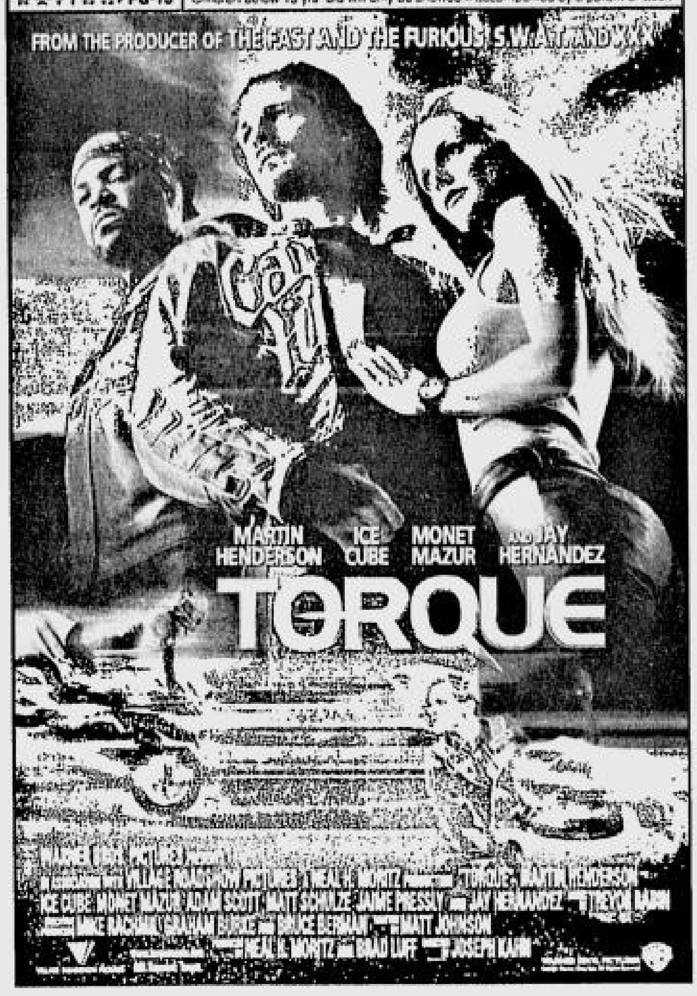
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RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	DUPLEX 10:55, 1:05, 3:15 5:25, 7:35, 9:45 PG-13
2	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE 11:30, 2:20, 5:10, 8:00, 10:50 R-13
3	RUNAWAY JURY 11:30, 2:20. 5:10 8:00, 10:50 R-13
4	MILAN 11:45, 2:15, 4:45 7:15, 9:45 PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

LOST IN TRANSLATION PG13 11:35, 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15, 10:20	DUPLEX PG13 11:50, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8.00, 10:00	RUNAWAY JURY R13 1:35, 4:10, 6:45, 9:25
COLD MOUNTAIN R18 12:25, 3.30, 6:35, 9:40	CHASING LIBERTY PG13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE R13 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:25

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2	MILAN	DOLBY DIGITAL
3	COLD MOUNTAIN	DTS
4	LOST IN TRANSLATION	DOLBY DIGITAL
5	DUPLEX	DOLBY DIGITAL
6	WATER DEMON	SDDS
7	HAUNTED MANSION	DOLBY
8	U-BELT	DOLBY
9	RUNAWAY JURY	DOLBY
10	KUYA	DOLBY

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ERMITA 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

1	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE	DOLBY DIGITAL EX
2	MILAN	DOLBY
3	COLD MOUNTAIN	DOLBY
4	GHOST HOUSE	DOLBY
5	LOST IN TRANSLATION	DOLBY
6	DUPLEX	SDDS
7	WATER DEMON	DTS

Big R Supercenter **METRO EAST** 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1	DUPLEX	DOLBY
2	COLD MOUNTAIN	SDDS
3	KUYA	DOLBY
4	U-BELT	DOLBY DIGITAL
5	WATER DEMON	
6	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE	DOLBY
7	MILAN	DTS
8	GHOST HOUSE	DOLBY

Big R Supercenter **NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW** 935-3229 / 31

1	DUPLEX	DOLBY DIGITAL
2	WATER DEMON	DOLBY
3	KUYA	DOLBY
4	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE	DOLBY
5	MILAN	DOLBY
6	COLD MOUNTAIN	DOLBY
7	U-BELT	DOLBY
8	GHOST HOUSE	DOLBY

Citisquare **MALABON** 288-0985/2575

1	WATER DEMON
2	MILAN
3	KUYA
4	U-BELT

big Supercenter **CAINTA** 240-4661

1	GHOST HOUSE
2	MILAN
3	DUPLEX
4	U-BELT

Big R Supercenter **STA. ROSA** Laguna (049)837-0907

1	MILAN
2	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3	U-BELT
4	KUYA
5	HAUNTED OFFICE

Big R Supercenter **LIPA** 757-3664 / 312-5870

1	MILAN
2	RUNAWAY JURY
3	KUYA
4	HAUNTED MANSION
5	WISHING STAIRS

Big R Supercenter **DASMARIÑAS** 852-2125

1	KUYA
2	MILAN
3	WISHING STAIRS
4	RUNAWAY JURY
5	COLD MOUNTAIN

Big R Supercenter **STARMILLS** San Fernando Pampanga 875-1927 / 961-5270

1	CHASING LIBERTY
2	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
3	KUYA
4	MILAN
5	21 GRAMS
6	DUPLEX

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858

1	WATER DEMON
2	DUPLEX
3	U-BELT
4 DTS	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
5	MILAN
6	KUYA

BACOLOD 441-0458/59

1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	CHASING LIBERTY
4	DUPLEX
5	KUYA
6	THE GATHERING

ILOILO 336-8070/78

1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	MILAN
3	CHASING LIBERTY
4	IN THE CUT
5	KUYA
6	GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE

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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING PUBLIC WORKS BAN AND RELEASE, DISBURSEMENT AND EXPENDITURES OF PUBLIC FUNDS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 10, 2004 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.
x--x

ABALOS, Benjamin Sr., S.	Chairman
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino, Jr., A.	Commissioner
GARCILLANO, Virgilio O.	Commissioner
BARCELONA, Manuel Jr.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 23 February 2004

RESOLUTION NO. 6634

The Commission on Elections, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, has **RESOLVED** to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, the following rules and regulations to enforce the prohibitions provided under Section 261, subsections (v) and (w) of the Omnibus Election Code.

SECTION 1. Prohibition on release, disbursement or expenditure of public funds. - Effective March 26, 2004 until May 10, 2004, no public official or employee including barangay officials and those of government-owned or controlled corporations and their subsidiaries shall release, disburse or expend any public funds for:

(1) Any and all kinds of public works, except the following:

(a) Maintenance of existing and/or completed public works project: *Provided*, That not more than the average number of laborers or employees already employed therein during the six-month period immediately prior to the beginning of the forty-five (45) day period before election day, shall be permitted to work during such time: *Provided, further*, That no additional laborers shall be employed for maintenance work within the said forty-five (45) days.

(b) Work undertaken by contract through public bidding held, or by negotiated contract awarded, before the forty-five (45) day period before election: *Provided*, That for the purpose of this Section work undertaken under the so-called "takay" or "paquiao" system shall not be considered as work by contract:

(c) Payment for the usual cost of preparation for working drawings, specifications, bills of materials, estimates, and other procedures preparatory to actual construction including the purchase of materials and equipment, and all incidental expenses for wages of watchmen and other laborers employed for such work in the central office and field storehouses before the beginning of such period: *Provided*, That the number of such laborers shall not be increased over the number hired when the project or projects were commenced; and

(d) Emergency work necessitated by the occurrence of a public calamity, but such work shall be limited to the restoration of the damaged facility.

No payment shall be made within five (5) days before the date of election to laborers who have rendered services in projects or works except those falling under subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), and (d), of this Section.

The prohibition shall not apply to ongoing public works projects commenced before the campaign period or similar projects under foreign agreements. For purposes of this provision, it shall be the duty of the government officials or agencies concerned to report to the Commission the list of such projects being undertaken by them as provided for under Sec. 3 of this Resolution.

(2) The Department of Social Welfare and Development and any other office in other departments of the government performing functions similar to said department, except for salaries of personnel, and for such other routine and normal expenses, and for such other expenses as the Commission may authorize after due notice and hearing. Should a calamity or disaster occur, all releases normally or usually coursed through the said departments and offices of other departments shall be turned over to, and administered and disbursed by, the Philippine National Red Cross, subject to the supervision of the Commission on Audit (COA) or its representatives, and no candidate or his or her spouse or member of his family within the second civil degree of affinity or consanguinity shall participate, directly or indirectly, in the distribution of any relief or other goods to the victims of the calamity or disaster; and

(3) The Human and Urban Development Coordinating Council and any other office in any other department of the government performing functions similar to said department, except for salaries of personnel and for such other necessary administrative or other expenses as the Commission may authorize after due notice and hearing.

SEC. 2. Prohibition against construction of public works, delivery of materials for public works and issuance of treasury warrants and similar devices. - Effective March 26, 2004, no person shall:

(1) Undertake the construction of any public works, except for projects or works exempted in the preceding Section; or

(2) Issue, use or avail of treasury warrants or any device undertaking future delivery of money, goods, or other things of value chargeable against public funds.

SEC. 3. Submission to the Commission of lists of authorized public works projects. - On or before March 30, 2004, the Secretary of Public Works and Highways, the provincial governors, city/municipal mayors and punong barangays in relation to national, provincial, city/municipal and barangay public works as the case may be, shall submit to the Commission in Manila thru the regional election directors/provincial election supervisors/election officers concerned certified lists of (a) all on-going public work projects commenced before March 26, 2004; (b) similar projects under foreign agreements; and (c) all public works undertaken by contract through public bidding held, or by negotiated contract awarded, before March 26, 2004 together with a copy of each of said contracts.

Any public works not included in the list herein required to be submitted by the Secretary of Public Works and Highways, the provincial governors, city/municipal mayors, and punong barangays, which are not among the exceptions under Sec. 261, subsection (v) of the Omnibus Election Code shall be considered as falling under the public works ban.

SEC. 4. Immediate payment of laborers required. - Any laborer who may have worked on public works projects which have to be suspended pursuant to the forty-five (45) day ban on public works shall be paid immediately his complete earned wage upon the suspension of the public works projects. In no case shall the earned wage or any portion thereof be retained to be paid only within five days before or on the day of the election. Likewise, any laborer who may have worked in public works projects authorized under any of subparagraphs (a) to (d) of Sec. 1 hereof, shall be paid his complete earned wage every regular pay day and in no case shall said wage or any part thereof be retianed or its payment deferred.

SEC. 5. Injunction. - The Department of Budget and Management and the COA, including all its field offices, are hereby enjoined not to release or authorize the release of any appropriation, or to pass in audit payments or expenditures of public funds that may directly or indirectly be used in violation of the prohibitions contained in Sec. 261, sub-sections (v) and (w) of the Omnibus Election Code or Sections 1 and 2 hereof.

All field offices of the Commission, including those of its deputized agencies and citizens arms, are directed to monitor compliance with the requirements under Sec. 3 hereof by the local executive officers in their respective jurisdictions and submit immediately to the Commission a written report on any violation of said provisions of the Omnibus Election Code.

SEC. 6. Penalty. - Any violation of the provisions of this Resolution shall, consistent with Sections 261 and 264 of the Omnibus Election Code, constitute an election offense and shall be punishable by imprisonment of not less than one year but not more than six years, among other penalties provided for by law.

SEC. 7. Effectivity. - This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh day after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 8. Dissemination. - The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation, immediately after promulgation hereof, and shall furnish the Executive Secretary, the Chairman of the Commission on Audit, heads of all departments, and national offices, provincial governors, city/municipal mayors and punong barangays and other agencies of the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, all registered political parties and all field offices of the Commission copies hereof.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

VIRGILIO O. GARCILLANO
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MANUEL BARCELONA, JR.
Commissioner

(PDI--Feb. 25, 2004)

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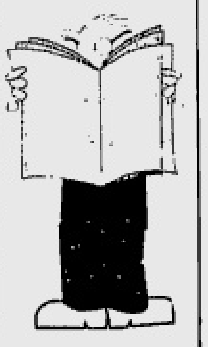

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National Power Corporation
GEOTHERMAL GENERATION
BAC-MAN GEOTHERMAL POWER PLANT COMPLEX

INVITATION TO BID

INTERESTED PARTIES/SUPPLIERS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PUBLIC BIDDING TO BE CONDUCTED ON MARCH 10, 2004 FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. PR#3BAC-04-0091 - SUPPLY OF LABOR AND MATERIALS FOR THE REWINDING/ RECONDITIONING AND REHABILITATION OF HOTWELL PUMP MOTOR
ESTIMATED COST: P1,785,000.00
2. PR#3BAC-04-0020 /PB-04-0122 - AUTO-TITRATOR, Titroline Alpha Plus
ESTIMATED COST: P907,500.00
3. PR#3BAC-04-0103 /PB-04-0118 - BALL VALVE, 3/4" WOG T316 ASTM & 7 Others
ESTIMATED COST: P967,500.00

PRE-BID CONFERENCE : MARCH 01, 2004/BMGPPC CONFERENCE ROOM / 2:00 P.M.
BIDDING DATE : MARCH 10, 2004 / BMGPPC CONFERENCE ROOM / 2:00 P.M.

COPIES OF BID DOCUMENTS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM PROCUREMENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION, GROUND FLOOR, BAC-MAN GEOTHERMAL POWER PLANT COMPLEX AND MUST BE SUBMITTED ON OR BEFORE MARCH 10, 2004, 2:00 P.M.

ALL BIDS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED WITH BIDDER'S BOND IN THE FOLLOWING FORMS:

- CASH, MANAGER'S OR CASHIER'S CHECK -- ONE (1)% OF THE ESTIMATED PRICE.
- 2.5% OF THE ESTIMATED PRICE ISSUED BY THE GSIS OR ANY REPUTABLE SURETY.
- 1 1/2% BANK GUARANTEE CONFIRMED/AUTHENTICATED BY A REPUTABLE BANK

ALL INTERESTED BIDDERS MUST SUBMIT PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 23, 2004.

(Sgd.) **ROLANDO E. CAWALING**
BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI - Feb. 16, 19, 25 & 27, 2004)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY SCREENING AND TO BID

Date: February 16, 2004
Contract No. BCMD 2004-002

1. Contract No.: BCMD 2004-002 Supply and Delivery of one (1) Unit of Brand New, Multi-Role, Single-Engine Helicopter for TransCo
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of supplying and delivering a Helicopter to TransCo Hangar, General Aviation Area, Domestic Airport, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid from the Internal Cash Generation is P83,000,000.00.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract bid.
5. The following manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors shall be eligible to participate in the bidding for the supply of goods:
   a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships;
   b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines;
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines;
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., a group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract; Provided, *however*, that Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with CDA.
6. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by TransCo in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the supplier's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Post qualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
7. Eligibility & Bid Documents will be available for issuance on February 18, 2004 at the **Bids and Contract Management Department**, Ground Floor, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-23-08 upon presentation of Letter of Intent and a payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.
8. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, statements and Bid Proposals (Technical and Price) shall be on or before March 24, 2004, 1:30 p.m. and shall be submitted at the MMD Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road TransCo, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

   If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission shall not be accepted. Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on March 10, 2004 at the same venue.
9. Manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors not yet included in the TransCo's List of registered Suppliers/Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A certificate of Registration will be issued to suppliers/contractors upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Taxpayer's Identification Number;
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation;
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;

   For foreign bidders in Joint Venture, the required documents applicable to entities doing business in the Philippines shall be substituted by the appropriate equivalent documents issued by foreign bidder's country, which documents shall be duly acknowledged and/or authenticated by the Philippine Consulate thereat.

   Note: Prospective bidders are allowed to submit the above requirements together with their Eligibility Forms and Documents during the deadline for the submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid proposals (Technical and Price)
10. TransCo reserves the right to reject any application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive and required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. The Contract to be bid shall be governed by the Provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
12. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **DOMINADOR S. GEONZON**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--February 25, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Antique
MUNICIPALITY OF BUGASONG
-oOo-
OFFICE OF THE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Municipality of Bugasong, Antique invites interested bidders to pre-qualify and to cast sealed bids for the delivery of various medicines details of which is posted at the Bulletin Board in the municipality reserved for the purpose with approved budget of Php1,000,000.00. The source of fund is the Priority Development Assistance Fund (RA 9026) of Senator Loren Legarda Leviste.

Interested parties may secure bid documents and eligibility requirements from the BAC SECRETARIAT, Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Bugasong, Antique.

The particulars of the bidding are as follows, viz.:

Issuance of Bid Documents	February 9 to 24, 2004
Opening/Submission of Bids	February 25, 2004/10:00 a.m.

Bidders shall submit on the date of the Opening/Submission of Bids two (2) sealed envelopes containing: (1) Checklist of Eligibility Requirements, Bid Security, its forms, amount and validity period, certification of the supplier/s that he/they has/have not been blacklisted, etc. and (2) Financial Proposal.

The BAC concerned reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason whatsoever, to waive any defects therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most responsive.

(Sgd.) GILSON R. BANTOLO
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Feb. 25, 2004)

IGNATIUS VINCENT T. WARQUE
a.k.a. "CHITO"

The person appearing above has two (2) pending warrants of arrest issued by the following judicial courts:

a) Regional Trial Court – Branch 55, Mandaue City docketed as Criminal Case No. DU-9878 for ESTAFA; and

b) Municipal Trial Court in Cities – Branch 1, Mandaue City docketed as Criminal Case No. 27405 for violation of Batas Pambansa Blg. 22.

(PDI--Feb. 14, 18, 21 & 25, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry and Investments Building
385 Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Makati City

Fax No. 8954024

Tel. Nos. 8976682
8901332

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **BON-ACE FASHION TOOLS, INC.** with address at **Tungkil, Minglanilla, Cebu** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as amended by Republic Act 7918, as a New Export Producer of Fashion & Home Accessories at a capacity of 135,000 Pieces Per Year and with proposed plant site at Tungkil, Minglanilla, Cebu has been officially accepted on January 14, 2004 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing and under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI--February 25, 2004)

NFA intensifies its rice distribution

THE NATIONAL Food Authority has intensified its rice distribution program amidst rising cost of gasoline prices to stabilize the supply and prices of the commodity

NFA Administrator Arthur C. Yap said the food agency is closely coordinating with local government units to strictly monitor the prices of NFA rice in public and private markets as well as in NFA accredited outlets nationwide.

The NFA, meanwhile, will start delivering rice allocations to its accredited outlets such as Tindahan ni Gloria Labandera sa Barangay (TGLB), Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke (BGP), and other outlets nationwide. The stocks must be paid in cash upon delivery (COD).

The NFA has started phasing out its mobile stores nationwide to give way to stationary outlets. It was learned after extensive evaluation that stationary outlets are more accessible to consumers as they are located in depressed and far flung barangays.

NFA accredited outlets, now numbering 22,968 nationwide, include those under the Targeted Rice Distribution Program (TRDP), Coconut Farmers Food Access Program (CFFAP), Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke (BGP), Tindahan ni Gloria Labandera sa Barangay (TGLB) and other individual rice retailers.

The NFA is closely monitoring the operations of its outlets to ensure the availability of NFA rice and that no overpricing shall take place.

For more information on NFA programs, the public may use the Text NFA program by sending inquiries, complaints and suggestions to cellphone number 0917-6210927.

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CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

YEARLY/MONTHLY/MAKATI Citland8 1/2/3BR/Furn P12-20T/mo Leg.Vill./1BR/8922642/5354352

PASIG

3rm + 2tb, md qtr w/parking nr Toyota & Global City 0927-3448458

ORTIGAS CTR 2BR unf 20T 1mdsrm w/carprk 412-1825

APARTMENT

MAKATI

2BR, 2TB, 12T SAV 8992148

2BR APT 1TB TEL GRGE HONDA ST P14T (0917)8318551 TEL 5214063

PASAY

2BR 2Stry P7.5T 510-0915

QUEZON CITY

BRAND NEW STUDIO FRISCO NR PANTRANCO 3730208

CUBAO P3.8 Ladys 9124428

ROOM & BOARD

PQUE P200/12HR 8275345

BUSINESS RENTAL

PTAMO nr BUENDIA 1st Class bldg 85/129/148/185m² 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

125 & 155sqms OFC/COM Spaces GF w/parking SAV Mktl T8963967

IBM PLAZA EASTWOOD LIBIS QC 0917-8133010

ORTIGAS CENTER 40 110 130 150m² 412-1825

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

COMMERCIAL

Factory/Whse for Sale/ Rent Mrkna Heights Mrkna City 5040sqm 3Bldg with Canteen and Exec 4 Bedroom Flat 10 Car/Truck Garage land mark: Iglesia Ni Cristo Parang Mkna . . . Contact: Dinah S Coo 9482881 / 82

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

94 Honda Accord Casa Maintained 300T Call 0917-8513234

CIVIC 97MDL 320T neg 09172087391

MITSUBISHI

L300 FB95MODEL 170T neg 09178123288

•MONTERO 5dr. P335T 5413430

NISSAN

Cefiro 2003 2Tkm P1.1M Blk 722-6415 • 0927-3440597

TOYOTA

'92 Corolla XE A1 cond P145T DBO 09178354797

VOLVO

2002Volvo S60 T5 18K Km 1.6M Neg. Ava/Lee 8481466

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Land Cruiser Surf Delica Space Gear Serena Safari Terrano MU Previa Town-Hi Ace Vanette Elf Canter etc A1 w/warranty T-In 9120647 09178342020

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

1T/Hiace 9136710/4333682

A B C CARS/VANS
NEW MODELS W/ OR W/O DRIVER
MLA HO 536-8822 • 303-9789
Q.C. BR 426-2278 • 426-4084

A Multinational Japanese Trading Firm is Urgently in need of an:

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Qualifications

Male or Female, 35-40 of age
Graduate from a reputable university
Certified Public Accountant
Good experience / background in tax matters
At least 5 years work experience

Position for Manager may be open if qualifications of applicant are sufficient

APPLY IN PERSON AND BRING YOUR COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ WITH TWO (2) 2X2 PHOTO TO:

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT
9/F, L.V. Locsin Building,
Ayala corner Makati Avenue,
Makati City

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

ADV L3 749-9605

CAR VANS 410-0495

★Vans Coaster Bus 422-9296

STAREX 7318549

Toyco Rent A Car-Cars Vans Coaster (02)800-6595

VONDOR
Hiace L300 Cars 8234623

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CAR LOAN 6567685

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 533-8254

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

CAR BUSNES OFW 524-3197

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN3743803

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

APPLIANCES

Samsung 43" Proj. P85000 New 722-6415 • 0927-3440597

AUDIO/ VIDEO

Aowa Home&Ent Sys Cmplete Bnew 0917-8214936

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-3419012

PHILIPPINE DOG SCHOOL TRAINS DOGS w/COMPETENCE TEL. 721-37-36

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
DIAMONDS/JEWELRY
Repair / Polish Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
Hyatt • 804-0484 / 834-2886
Greenhills • 724-4374

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
PawnTickets, Loans 5%
ROLEX
5646593 5897041
5633742 0917-8473744

WANTED
1 Restaurant Manager
1 Waitress
2 Waiters
1 Chef Assistant
1 Kitchen Helper
Dami Korean Restaurant
(Fort Strip, Fort Bonifacio, Global City)
Contact person : Mr. Edwin 02-820-1433
0919-697-7525

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8142309 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

BILLIARDS

23T New Comph SR Impld 7767507

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MUNOZ BRIONES PAWNSHOP
AUCTION SALE
• March 08, 2004 •
All unredeemed articles from October 1-30, 2003
•354 Roosevelt Ave QC 9AM.
•Pinatubo St. Mand City 10AM
•Libertad St corner Sierra Madre Mand. 11AM.
•109 Dela Rosa St Mkti 1PM.
V. ZAMORA Lic. Auctioneer

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

12%/mon. 14T 0922-8053727

Dissatisfied? Earn what your worth PT/FT 3756988

Earn Part Time/Full Time •Call/Text Joy 0927-5542366•

I NEED MEDICINES HOSP SUPPLIES & EQUIPT ANY QNTY TXT /CALL09275282875 Kristine

Int'l Homebased Business Earn up to 100k/mo 7423327

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

RTW factory price 3738821

Singapore Bizmen Looking for 6 Crazy Entrepreneurs who want to wear tailor made clothes & drive fancy sports cars. Will train. Call 0927-5680230

DIRECT SALE

SIDELINE: JEWELRY CONSIGN ORIENTATION M-S@9-8 4531478

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

SALESMAN w/ driver's license 4313975

FEMALE

SALES PROMO GIRLS White to Fair Complexion FOR Beauty Products 7248781 7272890

URGENTLY NEEDED GOOD MAID WITH NBI 430-7061•0918-6927324

MALE/FEMALE

AIRCON TECHNICIAN MALE 2YRS EXP 22YRS OLD SECRETARY FEMALE 18-25 YRS OLD COMPUTER LIT SINGLE 9730-B KAMAGONG ST MKTI 8968406

Direct Hire Office Mktng Staff 18-45 Coll grad/level w/-w/o exp 9957774/4389340 Andrea

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING PROGRAM W/CERTIFICATE 5899958 5614990 5212773

JOB FAIR 0918-3512066 Rica

JOB HIRING 09167054572 AINA

Mrktng Ofc Asst 09208062187

OFC Mktg Staff 0918-5004906 Jaz

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For inquiries and further details, please call
Mr. Ed Cruz at
(0917) 822-0270.

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(632) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 109/112
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OBITUARIES

RATE
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(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of
ORTIGAS & COMPANY, LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
deeply condoles with the family of

ATTY. EULOGIO "YOYONG" RODRIGUEZ y ROLLS

September 13, 1940 – February 22, 2004

who, for about four decades, has shared his legal expertise and invaluable contributions to the Company as a valued member of its Management Team.

His body lies in state at Arlington Chapel, Raymundo Ave., Pasig City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, February 26, 2004 after the 8:00 A.M. Mass at Loyola Memorial Park – Marikina.

**The Missionary Sisters
Servants of the Holy Spirit**

Announces the death of

SISTER MACILLA, S.Sp.S.

(GERTRUD KORTE)

on February 23, 2004 at the age of 78 at the Convent of the Holy Spirit, Quezon City.

Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on Wednesday, February 25, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. at the Convent of the Holy Spirit 8 Poinsettia Road, Quezon City.

Interment will follow at the Christ the King Cemetery, E. Rodriguez Ave., Quezon City.

"For by Me, your days will be multiplied and the years of your life increased..."

Proverbs 9:11

Our Dearly Beloved

CECILIA M. DONATO

Born: February 12, 1968
Died: February 24, 2004

Peacefully joined her Creator at the age of 36.

Her beloved sisters LIA and ALICE; brothers ADRIAN, DANIEL and JUN; brother-in-law EDGAR; nieces KAYLA and KATRINA; cousin-friend GEMMA & DEDET; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels-Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

**DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS**

CLASSIFIEDS

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

Offered for Sale on an "**as-is, where-is**" basis is the 10.29 hectare property, formerly belonging to **Pioneer Glass Manufacturing Corporation (PGMC)**, located at No. 1275 ME Gen. Trias Drive, Barangay Tejeros Convention, Rosario, Cavite with an **Indicative Price** of **P154,449,000.00**.

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on **23 March 2004,** at **3:00 p.m.** at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for the duly authenticated copies of the **Specific Rules** on **Offer for Sale (SROS)**, **Offer for Sale Form (OSF)**, together with the **Asset Specific Catalogue (ASC)** for a nominal fee of P1,000.00 from the PMO Marketing Office.

For more information, please call Ms. Nadine M. Atilano of the PMO Marketing Office at 817-8762/892-2145.

(PDI–February 25, 2004)

HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION
Republic of the Philippines
4th Flr., Jade Bldg., 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City

LOTS FOR NEGOTIATED SALE

ITEM NO.	BLOCK NO.	LOT NO.	LOT AREA (sqm.)	CLASSIFICATION	SELLING PRICE	LOCATION
1	2	6	5,000.00	INDUSTRIAL LOT	105,000,000.00	Manila Harbour Centre, Radial Rd. 10, Vitas, Tondo
2	2	7	5,000.00	–do–	105,000,000.00	–do–
3	4	10	10,000.00	–do–	205,000,000.00	–do–
4	6	30	257.89	COMMERCIAL LOT	5,544,635.00	–do–
5	16	2	2,458.40	–do–	55,314,000.00	–do–
6	16	3	2,455.40	–do–	55,246,500.00	–do–
7	17	4	3,319.70	–do–	73,033,400.00	–do–
8	18	8	419.48	–do–	9,018,820.00	–do–
9	18	9	419.48	–do–	9,018,820.00	–do–
10	18	10	419.48	–do–	9,018,820.00	–do–
11	19	10	373.37	–do–	8,027,455.00	–do–
12	19	13	373.37	–do–	8,027,455.00	–do–
13	19	14	373.37	–do–	8,027,455.00	–do–

For details, please call Sonia Villahermoso of the Cashflow Guaranty Dept. at 897-3310 & 897-3265 or Arnold Juta of the Developmental Guaranty Department at 897-3488.

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722-1155

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Metrobank trust assets hit the P100-billion milestone

METROBANK closed 2003 in a triumphant note having hit the P100-billion mark in its assets under management (AUM). At year-end, Metrobank's total AUM amounted to P107 billion, representing a hefty 50.7 percent increase from the December 2002 level of 71 billion.

Metrobank has consistently posted the biggest growth in the trust banking industry since 1999, growing 500 percent from P18 billion to over P100 billion in 4 years, or an average annual growth rate of 56 percent. Metrobank also chalked up a 16 percent market share.

Executive vice president and trust officer Josefina Sulit said, "The outstanding performance is due to the right product mix, investment expertise and the excellent service that we always strive to give our clients."

Among the best selling funds are MetroFund and Metro Dollar "Trust Fund. Metrofund is the flagship Philippine Peso fixed-income fund that allows clients to reinvest their interest income together with their principal on a regular basis. Metro Dollar Trust Fund, on the other hand, is the flagship US Dollar denominated fund invested in high-yielding dollar bonds and other dollar-denominated securities not usually accessible to local investors.

Other common trust funds are the Metro Common Wealth Fund, Metrofund Extra, Metrofund Max-5, Metro Invest Plus, and Metro Capital.

"With the various CTFs, clinets can choose the type of funds that matches their particular investment needs. We also have at our disposal research and technology that allow us to respond to market changes as well as investment and asset management needs of our clients," said EVP Sulit.

"Metrobank Trust Banking is driven by its main investment philosophy of always giving primary importance to capital preservation. We believe in safeguarding the funds entrusted by our clients as paramount to determining the potential returns and risks of any investment securities," Sulit added.

Abundance, the newest trust product, is designed for high net worth individuals. It combines the benefits of tax-exemption, estate planning and asset management under a living trust arrangement. The product has an added feature of Loyalty Travel benefit that allows clients to accumulate points redeemable as travel rewards.

Other customized trust products of Metrobank include Revocable and Irrevocable Trust, Life Insurance Trust and Investment Management. The Trust Banking Group also handles fund management for Corporate Accounts such as Retirement, Pre-need and School and Foundation funds, and other specific requirements of corporate accounts. It also serves the trust and agency needs of corporations issuing debt and equity instruments through Mortgage and Collateral Trust Identures, Loan Agency, Transfer and Paying Agency and Registry Services. It also handles escrow needs of both corporations and individuals.

The Bank's market leadership was affirmed by Watson Wyatt which cited Metrobank's Trust Banking group as one of the top-ranking fund managers for Employee Benefit Funds in the past 5 years.

Sulit says, "Really, the trust and support of our clients and business partners have been crucial to our growth and we thank them for that."

"Prospectively, the business is positioned to expand into global investment markets, at the right time with the right investment products and services, to cater to the growing investment sophistication of our clients," adds Sulit.

LEE JAMS AT SINULOG FESTIVAL

Cebu's Sinulog celebration took a unique and thunderous turn with Lee Denim USA taking part in the three day Sinulog Event 2004. Manila's hottest bands such as Parokya ni Edgar, True Faith and Rivermaya warmed up its sounds and blasted 3 nights worth of music in partyland, Cebu. Cebu's party animals packed Lee stores to get a hold of the free tickets to the event. Music lovers packed the area on all three nights as they immersed themselves to the tunes of Cebu's top bands. Manila's finest DJs made sure there were no dull moments in these parties. The entire event was held for the benefit of the Sto. Niño Children's Home Foundation. Shown are Parokya ni Edgar vocalist Chito Miranda and guitarist Gabriel Chee Kee with Lee's Darryl Chang and Kristine Uy at the Lee Denim USA Sinulog Event 2004 site.

BITS Clips

Eye disease treatment seminar

THE ASIAN Eye Institute is inviting eye doctors and specialists to a two-hour scientific lecture on new treatment strategies of "Venous Occlusive Disease," which will be held on Feb. 25 at Cravings, Fraser Place, Valero Street, Salcedo Village in Makati City. The lecture will start at 6:30 p.m. Conducting the lecture is the renowned retinal expert Frank L. Myers, MD, Chairman Emeritus of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics. The lecture is being sponsored by the Asian Eye Institute in cooperation with Alcon Laboratories, Philippines. Spearheading this noteworthy lecture is AEI's Dr. Harvey S. Uy, MD/Uveitis & Ocular Immunology, Retina & Vitreous Disease, Comprehensive Opthalmology. For those who want to attend, please call Sheila Llorin at 898-2020 and pre-register early as seats will be limited. Registration is free.

Photoworld Manila 2004

SOUTHEAST Asia's biggest and longest-running photo show and convention will be held from Feb. 25 to March 1 at the Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City. Organized by the Federation of the Philippine Photographers Foundation (FPPF), Photoworld Manila is the most comprehensive and exciting photo show in the Philippines. It will showcase the latest products and accessories for photographers. PWM is now on its tenth year with John Ching as 2004 chair. The theme of this year's celebration is "Photography Without Limits..." Top foreign and local photography experts will share their techniques in the seminars at the Asian Institute of Management. The rate will be P2,500. Students are entitled to a special rate. There is also a barkada rate for a group of 10, the 11th is free. Companies interested to join the trade fair and seminars can contact FPPF at 843-5341/813-7420/844-5661.

CLTS confab moved to QC Sports Club Plaza

THE 5TH National Education Conference has been moved to a new venue. The conference, presented by the Center for Learning and Teaching Styles of the Philippines (CLTS) and supported by GMA Network's Alta Productions, will be held at the Quezon City Sports Club Complex on Feb. 27 and 28. Believing that every student is a genius in more ways than one, this youth leadership confab is aptly themed "Kabataang Pinoy, Ikaw ay Henyo! Eh... Paano?" Students and teachers alike are guaranteed to have an enriching experience as they engage in various educational activities and come face to face with top plenary speakers. Plenary sessions will be headed by famous and successful personalities coming from different fields. They will share their stories of success as well as helpful guidelines in learning. Grade 5 to junior high school students and college freshmen, including teacher-advisers are invited to join the conference. A maximum of 10 participants will be allowed to represent each school/university. For more information, call 3744967 or 3740973.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Metro Manila 1103
Tel. Nos. 372-50-57 • 372-50-42
Fax Nos. 372-50-46 • 372-50-61

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources/Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR), invites qualified bidders/suppliers to participate in the bidding of **"Various Aqua Feed"**

Bid form together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Sealed bids will be received and opened at the BFAR, Conference Room, Quezon City, not later than **2:00 p.m. on April 01, 2004.**

Interested bidders are required to submit the following requirements upon securing bidding forms: Photo copies of Business License, Certification Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (Original copies to be shown for authentication purposes).

This office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI–February 25, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila

CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

**IN THE MATTER OF:
FIG FINANCING COMPANY, INC.
(Formerly, FIG Lending Investor Corp.)**

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AS A FINANCING COMPANY

NOTICE AND ORDER

Notice is hereby given that the above-named corporation has filed an application for a Certificate of Authority to engage in financing business in accordance with Sections 2, 4, and 5 of the Rules and Regulations to Implement the Provisions of Republic Act No. 8556 (The Financing Company Act of 1998). Its principal office shall be at 162 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Structure of the Applicant:	
Authorized Capital Stock	P10,000,000.00
Subscribed Capital Stock	10,000,000.00
Paid-up Capital Stock	10,000,000.00

According to the papers/documents presented, the following persons are the directors/officers of the corporation:

Name	Position
D. Arnold A. Cabangon	President
D. Alfred A. Cabangon	Director
J. Antonio A. Cabangon	Director
Antonio L. Cabangon Chua	Director
Armando C. Trinidad	Director
Atty. Francisco Jim Asuncion	Corp. Secretary

This Notice and Order shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks and shall be simultaneously posted in a public and conspicuous place in the City/Municipality where the office of the company is proposed to be located and in the office of the Commission.

Any interested party may oppose the application in writing, personally or through counsel within two (2) weeks after the last publication of the Notice. If the Commission finds that the requirements of R.A. 8556, the implementing Rules and Regulations and other pertinent laws have been complied with and no valid reason exists for the disapproval of the subject application, the Commission shall take appropriate action on said application.

SO ORDERED.
February 9, 2004

(Sgd.) **JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN**
Director

(PDI--Feb. 16 & 25, 2004)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will entertain offers on a First-Come, First-Served basis at the Asset Management Department, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties:

CODE REAL ESTATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
METRO MANILA *AMD-EL-104*	Galas, Quezon City (bounded by Luskot, Serrano Laktaw and Pedro Palerno Sts.)	2,400 m² industrial/residential lots (TCT Nos. N-171474 and 171477) with bldg. & imprvmts.	P 25,200,000.00
CWB-12	No. 51, Bignay St., Project 2, Quezon City	203.6m² residential lot (TCT N-254994) with bldg. & imprvmts.	P 4, 517,800.00
CWB-23	No. 29 Coronet cor. Corvette St., Fairview Park Subd., Quezon City	502 m² residential lot (TCT N-255070) with bldg. & imprvmts.	P 3, 112,600.00
AMD-ML-105	Ocean Park Avenue, Ocean Park Subd. (Bagbag), Novaliches, Quezon City	479 m² vacant residential lot (TCT N-213870)	P 1,724,400.00
AMD-PY-106	Lot 6, Blk. 2, DBP Village II, Almanza, Las Piñas	277 m² (TCT No. 352291)	P 1,662,000.00
AMD-ML-107	Vinegar St., Llenado Subd., Karuhatan, Valenzuela City	465 m² two (2) adjoining parcels of vacant residential lots (TCT Nos. V-61056 & V-61057)	P 1,512,000.00
BULACAN *AMD-PY-109*	Bgy. Malang Tubig, Baliuag	21,533 m² (TCT Nos. T-162317, T-162318 & T-162319) with bldg. & imprvmts.	P 15,213,500.00
NUEVA ECIJA *CWB-1*	Poblacion, Rizal	1,000 m² (TCT N-200001) w/ bldg. & imprvmts.	P 671,900.00
QUEZON *AMD-ML-108*	Mamala, Sariaya	62,108 m² interior lot (TCT T-392734)	P 23,078,600.00
RIZAL *CRA-32a-c*	Narra St., Loremar Homes, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo City	300 m² each vacant residential lot (TCT Nos. R-11000, R-11001 and R-11002)	P 750,000.00 per title
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AMD-PAY-109a	Brgy. San Isidro, Minalin, Pampanga	1 unit 75 KVA generating set/2 units conveorized powder coating oven/1 unit shearing machine/1 unit 50-ton hydraulic machine/1 unit power press	P 1,194,000.00
AMD-PAY-109b	No. 6 Banner St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City	1 unit PVL shrinking machine/2 units hydraulic press (250 ton capacity)	P 3,129,000.00
AMD-ML-110a	Brgy. Mamala, Sariaya, Quezon	One (1) set Feed Milling equipment	P 164,430.00
AMD-ML-110b	Brgy. Mamala, Sariaya, Quezon	Three (3) units Molasses Storage Tanks	42,750.00
AMD-ML-110c	Brgy. Mamala, Sariaya, Quezon	One (1) unit ACC Electric Generating Set	133,200.00

Forms for negotiated offers may be obtained from AMD-Acquired Assets.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2218/2252 for Code starting with AMD; and
926-1686 or 818-9511 loc. 1411 for CWB and CRA

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI–February 25, 2004)

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-PSD-2004-03

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-PSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

SCHEDULE	ITEM/DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 16, 2004; 9:00 AM			
3A1	TUBES, HEAT EXCHANGER, STRAIGHT AND EXTERNALLY FINNED, SEAMLESS	OMRM-04-005 (RA)	P 4,795,000.00
3A2	RATCHET HANDLE REVERSIBLE HEXAGON SOCKETS, CARBIDE BURRS & WELDING ELECTRODES	OMRM-04-007 (RA)	P 1,058,960.00
3A3	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATLS FOR THE REPAIR, TESTING & SATISFACTORY OPERATION OF ECONO-SHEAR (IOWA SHEAR) MACHINE	OOMR-04-011 (RA)	P 1,639,048.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 16, 2004; 2:00 PM			
3B1	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATLS, SUPERVISION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF FM-200 FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INCLUDING ENG'G, TESTING & COMMISSIONING AT COA RECORD ROOM, STORAGE BLDG, NPC POWER COMPLEX	OPRS-04-016 (AC)	P 5,000,000.00
3B2	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATLS. FOR THE REPAIR OF FFWSDO HOUSING/ QUARTERS AT ANGAT HEP	FFW-03-034 (LS)	P 1,000,000.00
3B3	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATLS, TOOLS, EQUIPTS., CONSUMABLES & TECH. SUPERVISION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF NEW OIL MIST DETECTORS	PB4-03-148 (NY)	P 2,700,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 17, 2004; 9:00 AM			
3C1	VARIOUS FLY ASH PIPE ELBOWS	1MCF-03-488 (JP)	P 1,540,000.00
3C2	HYDROVANE COMPRESSOR, BRAND: HYDROVANE OR EQUIVALENT	1MCF-03-525 (JP)	P 980,000.00
3C3	SPARE PARTS FOR "BTG" TURBINE BY-PASS VALVES BRAND: BTG, TYPE VLB	IMCF-04-027 (LS)	P 10,000,000.00
3C4	COMPRESSION FITTINGS, STAINLESS STEEL TUBINGS & MALE CONNECTORS	IMCF-04-068 (LS)	P 1,635,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 17, 2004; 2:00 PM			
3D1	PUMP, FYBROC MODEL 1500	1MCF-04-052 (LS) 1MCF-04-053 (LS)	P 720,000.00 P 950,000.00
3D2	BATTERY, SEALED VALVE REGULATED LEAD ACID TYPE, GNB IND'L BATTERY MODEL ABSOLYTE TYPE 100A63 OR EQUIVALENT	1MCF/ES-04-061 (JP)	P 11,550,000.00
3D3	HYDROCHLORIC ACID (HCL)	1MCF-04-037 (ZC) 2BCF-03-932 (ZC)	P 1,550,000.00 P 2,730,000.00
3D4	RESISTOR, THYRISTOR, FIELD CIRCUIT BREAKER & SIGNALLING LAMP OF GENERATOR FOR STATIC EXCITATION SYSTEM OF UNITS 1-4 OF MHEP	1 MAG-03-0179 (NY)	P 1,348,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 18, 2004; 9:00 AM			
3E1	J.O.-ENG'G, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF BRAND NEW BAGVENT FILTER ASSEMBLY FOR PRIMARY E.P. FLY ASH STORAGE SILO INTENDED FOR BCFTPP	2BCF-03-798 (NY)	P 4,875,000.00
3E2	VARIOUS MOTOR COMPRESSOR	2BCF-03-799 (NY)	P 1,522,000.00
3E3	BUTTERFLY VALVE W/ AIR OPERATED DOUBLE ACTING ACTUATOR	2BCF-03-872 (NY)	P 1,500,000.00
3E4	GROUND FAULT RELAY & CURRENT TRANSFORMER	2BCF-04-070 (NY)	P 4,750,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MARCH 18, 2004; 2:00 PM			
3F1	ATOMIC ABSORPTION SPECTROMETER	3TGP-03-052 (ZC)	P 2,000,000.00
3F2	SYSTEM 1 CONDITION MONITORING & DIAGNOSTIC SYSTEM	5LGP-03-331 (JP)	P 9,700,000.00
3F3	CIRCUIT BREAKER, MINIMUM OIL	5PGP1-03-301 (JS)	P 5,000,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held at the Bidding Room for the following bidding schedules on:

3A1-3A3	MARCH 3, 2004; 9:00 AM	3D2-3D4	MARCH 4, 2004; 9:00 AM
3B1-3B3	MARCH 3, 2004; 2:00 PM	3E1-3E4	MARCH 5, 2004; 9:00 AM
3C1, 3C3, 3C4 & 3D1	MARCH 4, 2004; 2:00 PM	3F1-3F3	MARCH 5, 2004; 2:00 PM

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Services Division, Materials Management Dept. of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non refundable fee of Php 500.00 per schedule starting on **February 27, 2003. Issuance of Eligibility and bid documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM up to the specified time as stated in the bid schedules above. No bid documents will be issued three (3) calendar days before the date of bidding.**

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, PSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registrations issued by former Genco Offices wil be honored provided that the Certification is still valid. Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of "Republic Act 9184."

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit – One Percent (1%), Surety Bond-Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand with 120 days validity period from the date of opening of bids issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

CHAIRMAN
Bids and Awards Committee
PSD-NPC

(PDI–February 25 & March 4, 2004)

BUSINESS

Asia to grow by 5.9% from 2004-2008–EIU

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"OECD growth is expected to moderate, and China's demand for imports could also slow—the Chinese economy is exhibiting signs of an investment bubble in some sectors that could force a policy tightening and a slowdown in Chinese domestic demand over the next few years," it said.

Ironically, the strong Chinese economy, which grew 9.1 percent last year, is also forcing the rest of Asia to undertake economic reforms if they are to capitalize fully from its growth, the EIU said.

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EIU predicts the 10 nations making up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) will grow 5.7 percent in 2004 from 4.4 percent in the previous year.

The 2004 projections are based on strong import demand from China and India, with which Asean is negotiating separate free trade agreements.

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In the Philippines, which is also holding presidential polls, economic growth this year is tipped at 4.5 percent, it said.

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WTO says trade deal may still be struck

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"This meeting comes at a crucial time, because we are trying to put the negotiation round back on track and we hope the Cairns Group meeting in San Jose will send the right signals to motivate countries to get into real negotiations and to make the negotiations as successful as possible within the first half of this year," Panitchpakdi told reporters.

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TOYOTA

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

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"IT'S such a good feeling to receive e-mail from someone who relates to our songs," says Simple Plan's Pierre (left), with David and Jeff.

The kids are alright

'We'd rather be the band that people hate than be the band people don't know about'

THE READER OCCUPATION OF AP >>>
YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS & THE BANDS ANSWER
AP
The Target Shoots Back
Simple Plan
Take Their Shots -And Yours
Less Than Jake
SKA-PUNKS WITHOUT BORDERS
Jawbreaker's
Dear You
BEHIND THE ACCIDENTAL CLASSIC

COVER BOYS. The January 2004 cover of Alternative Press

Text and photos by Maui Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

A SUDDEN change in schedule has moved my interview with Pierre, Jeff and David of Simple Plan 15 minutes earlier, thus making me miss my chance to chat with three-fifths of one of TRL's fave punk pop rockers as they head off to do a round of radio interviews.

But there's no need for me to go sulk in a corner alone. Luckily, drummer Chuck and guitarist Sebastien have opted not to go to the radio interview and instead play a game of word association with me.

Movie?

Chuck (C): "Lost in Translation," I don't know why.

Sebastien (S): "Life" (points to my "The Movielife" pin).

Pierre?

C: Annoying.

S: Bully.

Big hands?

C: Masturbation.

S: Big shoes.

Call girls?

C: Wish I could afford them.

S: Yeah. Expensive.

Singaporean chicks?

C: Hot.

S: Yeah, hot.

Cool childhood stories?

C: I have tons. This one time I got beaten by a dog.

S: I had just turned 14 and I got laid!

C: This guy used to have it all the time on the train. I wanna have sex on a train. I wanna have sex anywhere, actually.

It's quite easy to label these guys as just another sellout, one of the many bands that, along with Avril Lavigne, have morphed into so-called spokespersons for the youth.

Acting like 13-year-olds let loose in a playground, the guys of Simple Plan attempted to turn the photo room backstage at the MTV Asia Awards upside down, and even poured a glass of water down vocalist Pierre's shirt in front of the press.

So you might think that with their pop-punk pogo-worthy beats and impressive lyrical compositions ("It's 6 a.m. the clock is ringing/I need to spend an hour snoozing," from "The Worst Day Ever"), these guys are just another flash in the pan, a trend that will easily fade once those teens grow up and opt to spin a Norah Jones record than another Good Charlotte-wannabe band.

You think the band cares? Think again.

"We're fully aware that people hate us and we're cool with that. Go on and hate, I don't care," Chuck says.

Something normal

The Simple Plan story started when singer Pierre Bouvier and drummer Chuck Comeau were 13 years old and formed a band called Reset.

They then left that band and started a new one, this time with friends Jeff Stinco (guitars), David Desrosiers (bass), and Sebastien Lefebvre. Simple Plan was born.

"I think our parents secretly wished we were doing something normal," Sebastien, who claims he was a nerd back in school, later confesses. "But they think it's cool that we get to travel the world."

"I think more than being proud, they're shocked," Chuck agrees. "They're like, "Wow, how about that?! We were wrong, we give them bad advice, we're bad parents."

Being in Simple Plan does provide many benefits, among them: being one of TRL's fave acts, scoring gold records and playing a sold-out concert in Japan.

But the band's success didn't exactly happen overnight. Sure, the guys played shows with Blink 182 when the latter was still promoting its first album, but even then, Simple Plan's music was simply not much appreciated.

After hooking up with producer Arnold Lanni, the band cut its debut album, "No Pads, No Helmets... Just Balls" in Toronto and New York, with some help from some musician friends: Joel of Good Charlotte, who did vocals on "You Don't Mean Anything," and Mark Hoppus of Blink 182 ("I'd Do Anything").

Recording with someone they've toured with years ago has helped the band realize that they've come a long way.

"[When Blink] got really big, we were like, "Wow man, this is awesome for them!" We love that kind of music. And that was the time Green Day, Bad Religion, NOFX were making it," Chuck remembers.

"We were like, okay, this is the kind of music we care about, and the world is finally understanding what we love about it. And that was the music we were playing as well, and we thought, hopefully one day it would open doors for us. And when our record happened, and when the All-American Rejects happened, we were like, "Yeah! This scene is alive!"

THE KIDS/ C2

CHUCK (left) sends his love to the critics, while Sebastien shares, "I wouldn't be surprised if no one remembers me from high school. I was a transparent kid."

onstage 2nyt

Cowboy Grill	Cowboy Grill	Cowboy Grill
LAS PIÑAS ☎ 801.7644	SERSIDE ZEST	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MABINI ☎ 525.1474	MIXED-UP M PEOPLE/PUZZLES	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 6AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
MALATE ☎ 521.8143	KOOLJACKS FAT 16	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
NOVALICHES ☎ 936 9757	EMMANUELLE MEN OPPOSE	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
BIÑAN ☎ (049)511.7768	E-MAGE AFTER 8	OPEN FROM 6PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
TIA MARIA'S REMEDIOS ☎ 522.0479	TIA MARIA'S CROSSTOWN KENDI	TIA MARIA'S NO ENTRANCE FEE

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a **Preschool** *for critical thinkers and creative kids*
and **Day Care Center** in *Makati*

invites you to its Open House
on Feb. 27, 2004 1:00 - 3:00

It's a fun-filled
educational activities
for your kids 2.5 to 5 years old.

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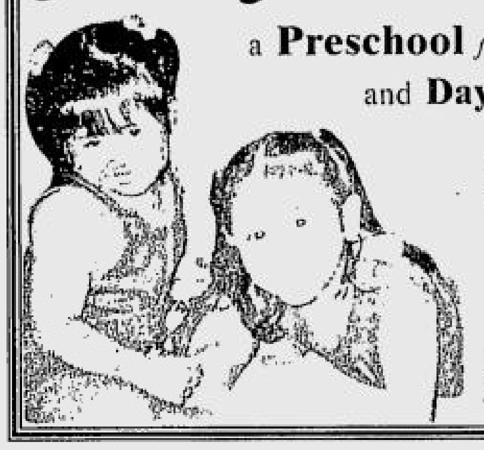

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LOWER GROUND LEVEL: [illegible]
GROUND LEVEL: [illegible]
FOURTH LEVEL: [illegible] FIFTH LEVEL: [illegible]

THE PODIUM

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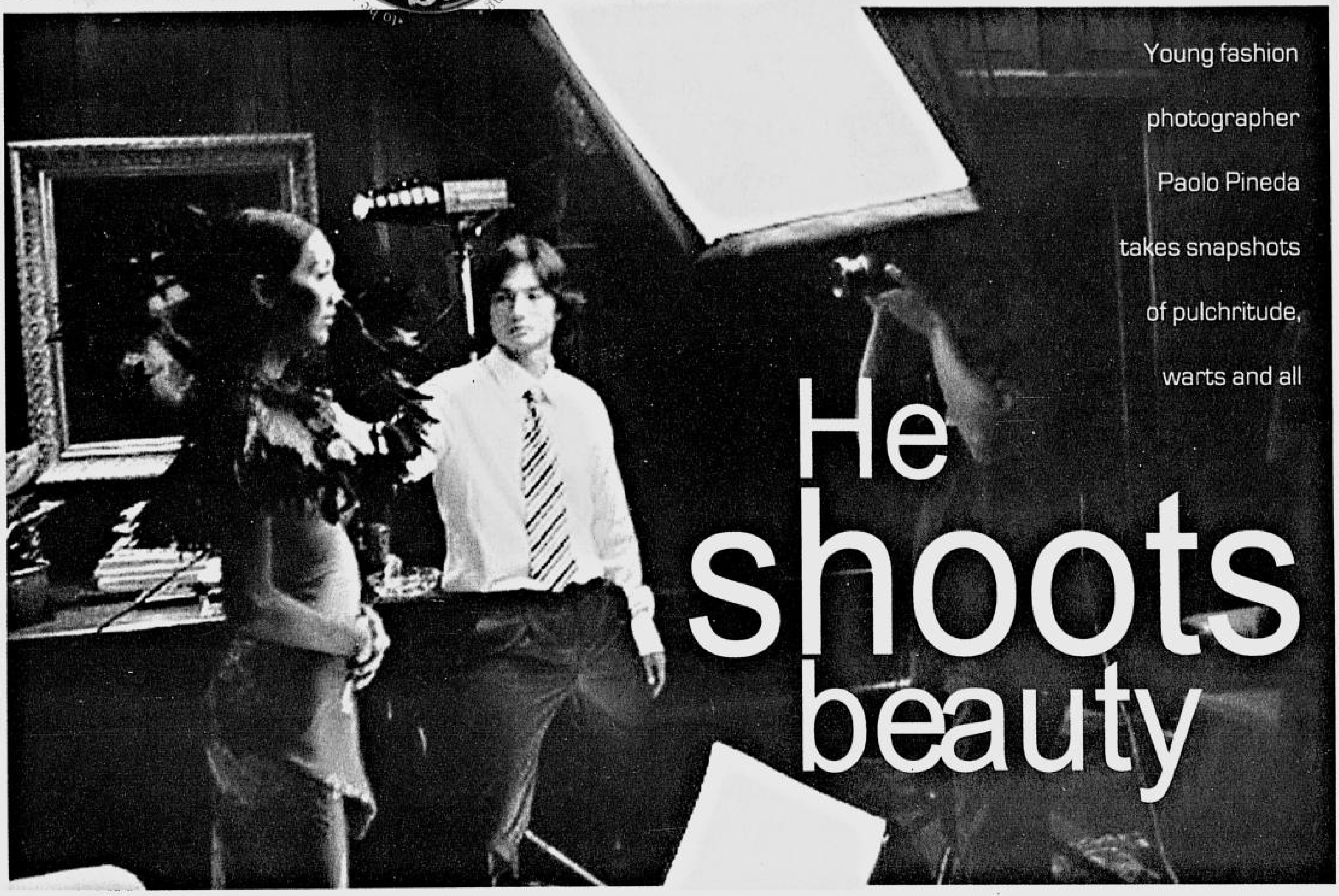

He shoots beauty

Young fashion photographer Paolo Pineda takes snapshots of pulchritude, warts and all

By Bea Ledesma
2bU! Contributor

MEET Paolo Pineda, the current "It" photographer of Manila's fashion scene. At such a young age, he is at the top of his game.

"I just turned 23," he said. "When I started out, I wanted to shoot what was going on around me. I was waiting for things to happen. But it got to a certain point when instead of just waiting for images to happen, I wanted to make images happen."

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In the process, he has earned both raves and put-downs.

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THE ARTIST at work

PAOLO is driven by his passion for fashion and beauty.

The problem may lie with technology, rather than Pineda's talents. His medium is digital photography, which he has chosen for its ease and convenience, not to mention affordability. But printing is problematic.

Aside from the not-so-fine color separation, printing houses use second-generation digital images; they are images downloaded from the camera for a look-over.

The corrected images are scanned and then laid out. This process takes the "zing" out of the original images.

Digital future

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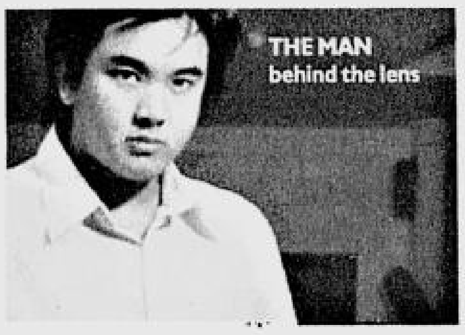

THE MAN behind the lens

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Instead, he says he wants to push mainstream photography into the realm of art without sacrificing commercial viability.

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Such openness to art allows him to remain objective when it comes to other photographers' work. It is this same open-mindedness that allows him to be more honest with his outputs.

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Chuck admits that there are dark emotions in the record, a certain kind of "isolation" that every kid goes through while growing up. And that doesn't exclude the band.

"I don't care how many records you sell and how things are going in your life. You can have all the gold records you want in the world, but you still have issues. And you're still vulnerable, you're still prone to have many kinds of emotions, to be heartbroken or lost and confused," he says.

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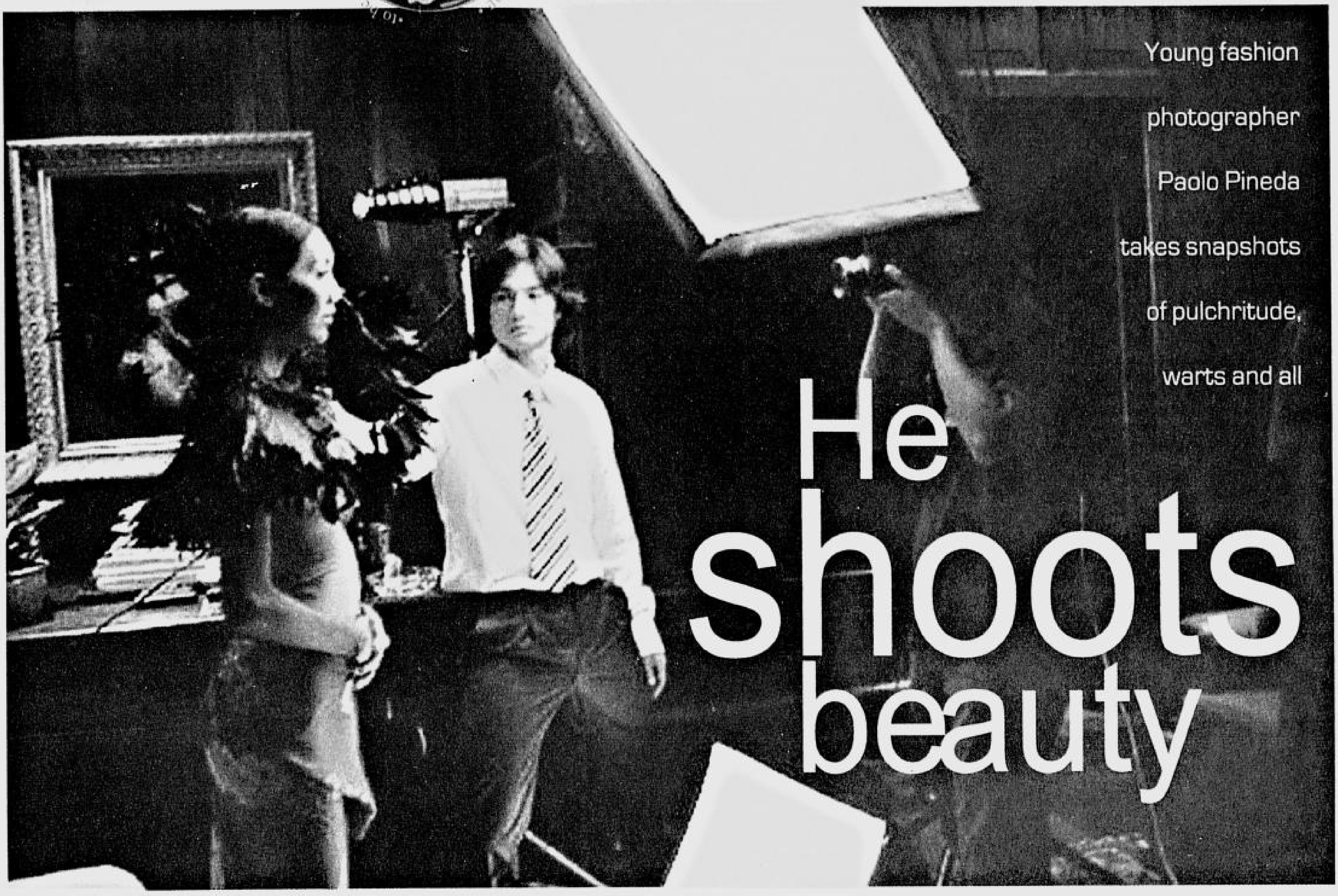

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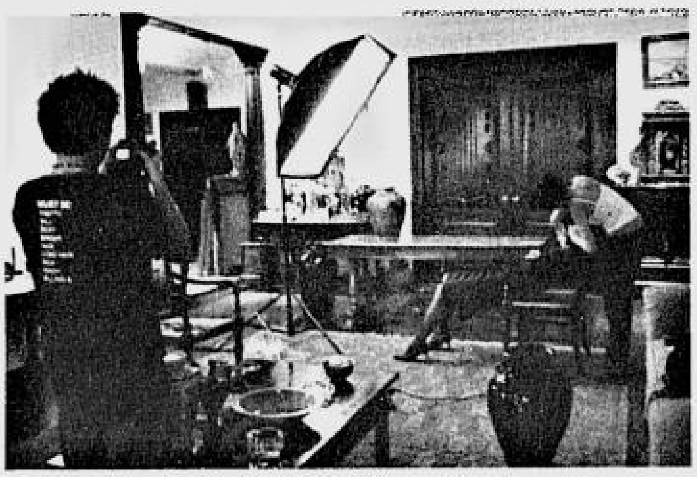

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A high-tech wonder

Tungsten T3
OS Version: 5.2.1
Processor: type 22
Power: Lithium Ion
320 x 480 pixel hi-res display
3.25 x 2.20in with a diagonal of 3.87in. 50-percent larger than any Palm-branded PDA to date

By Gary Mercado
2bU! Correspondent

FIRST off, I have to admit I have limited experience with Palms, or most PDAs for that matter. I was first issued one year ago in my job, and I promptly kept it in my desk most of the time. Needless to say, I wasn't issued one again.

Which was fine with me, frankly. While I duly respect those who went gaga over it and similar gadgets, I personally felt they didn't really do much for productivity like it said it would, or at least with mine.

So while I worked with computers 24/7, my inner geek was satisfied with tweaking code rather than playing with things nice and shiny.

Nice and shiny

Enter the latest challenge to this philosophy, and what a worthwhile challenge it is: the Tungsten T3 from PalmOne, which is about as nice and shiny as a PDA can get.

The T3 is one of eight offerings in Palm's lineup, and along with the Tungsten E and the Zire 21, are spanking new designs.

The Tungsten series is for the 'business class' and stands out from the hipper Zire series with its shiny coats, loads of features and greater number of things it can do.

Some details to remember are the 64mb storage, a more-than-capable Intel Xscale 400mhz processor, built-in Bluetooth, built-in voice memory recorder, MP3 playback, stereo jack and video playback capability, Word compatibility and expansion slots for memory cards.

And the whopper: an amazing 320x480 transflective color display monitor, which can switch from portrait to landscape by sliding its lower partition. This is the T3's standout feature and its primary selling point.

The higher model Tungsten C features a built-in keyboard and wi-fi, while the Tungsten W is also a phone. But the T3 offers a bigger screen than any of them, is lighter at 5.6 oz, and—get this—not too badly priced at $399 for a high-end PDA.

Along with the core functions like calendar, contacts, tasks, memos, notepad, voice memo, calculator and expense, the gadget has DataViz Documents To Go Pro Ed V.6 for reading Word and Excel documents, the VersaMail 2.6 e-mail client, Phonelink, Dialer, an SMS application (you'll need to attach it to a phone), Palm Photos to view graphic files, RealOne Media Player and the Kinoma Player to view movies and listen to MP3s, Palm Desktop 4.1, Outlook synching ability, a PDF reader, some Bluetooth applications, a Java app, and some games. Whew!

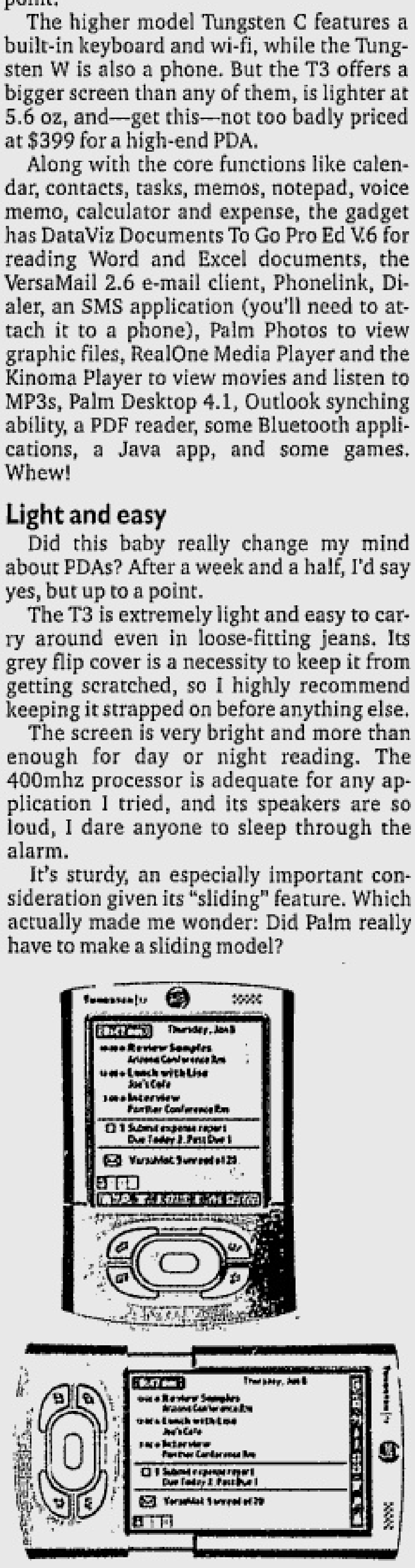
Light and easy

Did this baby really change my mind about PDAs? After a week and a half, I'd say yes, but up to a point.

The T3 is extremely light and easy to carry around even in loose-fitting jeans. Its grey flip cover is a necessity to keep it from getting scratched, so I highly recommend keeping it strapped on before anything else.

The screen is very bright and more than enough for day or night reading. The 400mhz processor is adequate for any application I tried, and its speakers are so loud, I dare anyone to sleep through the alarm.

It's sturdy, an especially important consideration given its "sliding" feature. Which actually made me wonder: Did Palm really have to make a sliding model?



THE COLOR display monitor can switch from portrait to landscape for extra picture space.

After a while, I forgot all about the extra-wide screen and just began using the Palm in its normal state. Reminds me of Nokia's now-classic 8110 used by Keanu Reeves et al when the Matrix was still cool. It's all nice and snazzy, but ultimately the novelty wears off.

I did, however, begin to understand the fuss many people have about PDAs. Once you have it, you can connect to the Internet via a PC, and open up a whole new geek side of you.

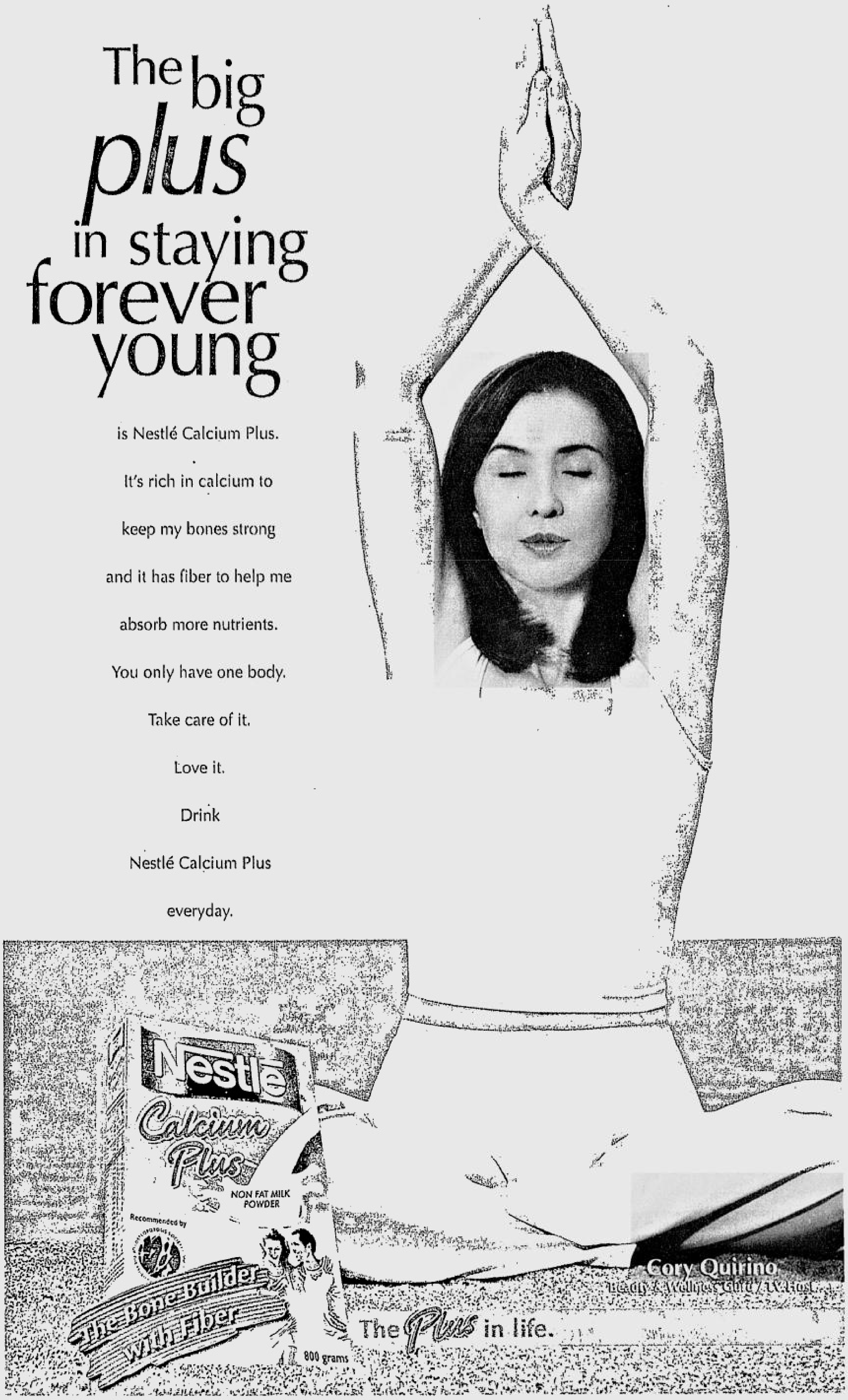
You will visit sites such as Palmgear.com and Download.com and scour them for "useful" software. You will join Mapalad.org's excellent forum to find tips and tricks on how to, say, take screenshots or uninstall databases. You will learn the finer points of the .pdb and .prc files and learn to tweak them. And finally, you will text and e-mail similarly inclined friends to talk about your gadget, or just compare Textwist or Bejewelled scores.

In my case, I even uploaded a screenshot of my scores to my webpage for some gloating, Internet style.

If you are the type to rely heavily on a PDA for your daily activities or just enjoy showing off, you would do well to consider the Tungsten T3.

Tungsten|T3
8:00
12:00 Review Samples (Arizona Conference Rm)
12:00 Lunch with Lisa (Joe's Cafe)
3:00 Interview (Panther Conference Rm)
7:00 Pack for trip tomorrow
New
Details
Go To

The T3 is one of eight offerings in Palm's lineup that offer spanking new designs and whiz-bang features



The big *plus* in staying forever young

is Nestlé Calcium Plus.

It's rich in calcium to

keep my bones strong

and it has fiber to help me

absorb more nutrients.

You only have one body.

Take care of it.

Love it.

Drink

Nestlé Calcium Plus

everyday.

The Plus in life.

Win VIP tickets to Incubus concert

DEAD-RINGER. Maybe it was the hair, maybe it was the bonnet, or maybe it was the smoldering stare that made us choose Ray Andrew Remolador's pic. He's from Banawa, Cebu City.

LAST week, we asked you to comb your city for a Brandon Boyd look-alike, dress him up in Jag jeans and shirt and send us his picture.

Lucky 18-year-old Ray Andrew Remolador from Banawa, Cebu City, did just that. Two VIP tickets to the Incubus concert are now waiting for him.

This week, 2bU! is on the lookout for die-hard Incubus fans! Tell us why you love Incubus and get a chance to win two tickets to the "Incubus Live In Manila" concert on March 12 at the CCP Open Grounds.

E-mail us a short paragraph why you love Incubus at contest2bu@yahoo.com. Don't forget your name, address, age and mobile phone number. Contest will run until March 10. Winners should present their ID when claiming tickets at the Jag Jeans boutique in Glorietta 1. Look for Jessie Coloma from Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tickets for the Incubus concert are now available at all SM Ticketnet outlets and Jag Jeans boutiques at Glorietta 1, Robinsons Ermita and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. Ticket prices are reserved seats at P1,950 and standing at P950 and P550. For sales and inquiries, call SM Ticketnet at 9115555 or Jag Jeans Glorietta 1 at 8171158.

The concert is presented by Smart Buddy, LoneStar Ultra and Jag Jeans and is also brought to you by Petron Blaze, Converse, official music channel MYX and participating radio stations Magic 89.9 DWTM, 103.5 K-Lite, RX 93.1, Joey 92.3 and NU107.

Join the Incubus Worldwide Fan Conference on Feb. 27 by logging onto their website www.enjoyincubus.com at 6:30 a.m.

SMART Buddy GSM Pre-paid
downloads
zed newlist

Start your own trend! Download the newest logos, ring tones and picture message

New ring tones

Hey Ya	*Outkast*	TONE HEYYA
Toyang	*Eraserheads*	TONE TOYANG
Dawson's Geek	*Busted*	TONE DAWSONG
My Favorite Things	*Outkast*	TONE MYFAVE
Let Her Down Easy	*Ronan Keating*	TONE LETHER
I Found Someone	*Cher*	TONE FOUNDS
Guilty	*Blue*	TONE GUILTY
Sexed up	*Robbie Williams*	TONE SEXED
New Deep	*John Mayer*	TONE NEWDEEP
Something's Missing	*John Mayer*	TONE SMISSING

Get the hottest ring tone automatically delivered to your cell phone weekly. Type **POWTONE** and send to **288**

Featured tone of the week: **Powerless** by **Nelly Furtado**.
Exclusively available via POWTONE.

New logos

LOGO MYBEAR1 · LOGO CUTIE4 · LOGO THINKING1
LOGO PLUS · LOGO HART1 · LOGO TIGERHART
LOGO DRAGON9 · LOGO COOL6 · LOGO PUMA1
LOGO SLEEPY · LOGO KUTING · LOGO WHALES
LOGO READY · LOGO WINK2 · LOGO 4LIFE
LOGO TAKEC · LOGO DUDE1 · LOGO ALIENS
LOGO HIPCAT · LOGO BOTTLE2 · LOGO CATHART

Get the hottest logo automatically delivered to your cell phone weekly. Type **POWLOGO** and send to **288**.

New pictures

PIC MISSPUP · PIC KOALA1 · PIC KISSME8
PIC LUVGIRL1 · PIC HONEY4 · PIC LBUG
PIC BIRDIES1 · PIC BMINE · PIC HARTS8
PIC DATE4 · PIC AGAIN1 · PIC GAML1
PIC MGWAPITO · PIC SILIP · PIC UPSIDE

Get the hottest picture message automatically delivered to your cell phone weekly. Type **POWPIC** and send to **288**.

CAL GAL
Get a different "girly" calendar logo everyday!
FEB 25 WED
Just send CALGAL to 288.
P5 per daily delivery of logo.
CAL GUY
Get a different "guy" calendar logo everyday!
WED 25 FEB
Just send CALGUY to 288
P5 per daily delivery of logo.

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- Eunice Mendoza
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YULE B COOL
4 Days to go 'til the Grand Draw!
Over ₱3.5 million in cool, cool prizes!
Send YULE to 288 and download now!

How to download a logo, ring tone or picture message:

1 TYPE IN KEYWORD. EX. LOGO MYBEAR1, TONE HEYYA, OR PIC MISPUP
2 Send to 288.
3 Save upon receiving logo, ring tone or picture message.

To send a logo, tone or picture message to a friend, type **<keyword> <cell phone number>** and send to **288**.
To send a logo, LOGO MYBEAR1 09181234567.
To send a tone, TONE HEYYA 09181234567.
To send a picture message, PIC MISPUP 09181234567.

www.smart.zed.com

To download all these from your SMART Super SIM, simply go to the SMART Menu, select SMART zed and then select My Favorites. Just click on the service you wish to download. It's so easy! Logos, ring tones and picture messages are supported by selected Nokia handsets. **Also available to Talk 'N Text subscribers** P15.00 for every successful download. Download now!

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Call the SMART Hotline at 888-1111, text us at 888 (P 1.00 per message sent in excess of the FREE TEXT allocation), e-mail us at customercare@smart.com.ph, or visit the SMART Wireless Center nearest you.

SMART Simply Amazing!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Win VIP tickets to Incubus concert

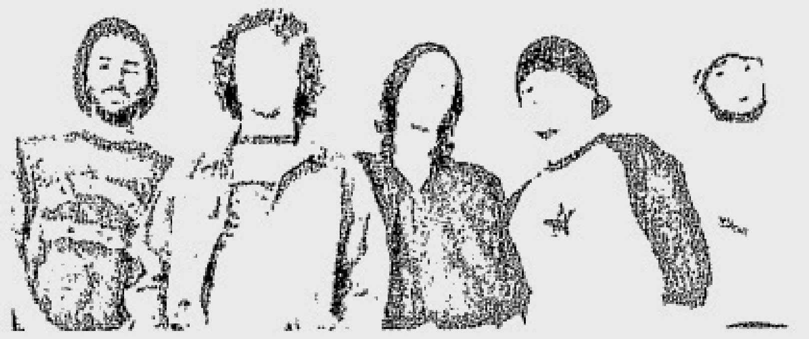
DEAD-RINGER. Maybe it was the hair, maybe it was the bonnet, or maybe it was the smoldering stare that made us choose Ray Andrew Remolador's pic. He's from Banawa, Cebu City.

LAST week, we asked you to comb your city for a Brandon Boyd look-alike, dress him up in Jag jeans and shirt and send us his picture.

Lucky 18-year-old Ray Andrew Remolador from Banawa, Cebu City, did just that. Two VIP tickets to the Incubus concert are now waiting for him.

This week, 2bU! is on the lookout for die-hard Incubus fans! Tell us why you love Incubus and get a chance to win two tickets to the "Incubus Live In Manila" concert on March 12 at the CCP Open Grounds.

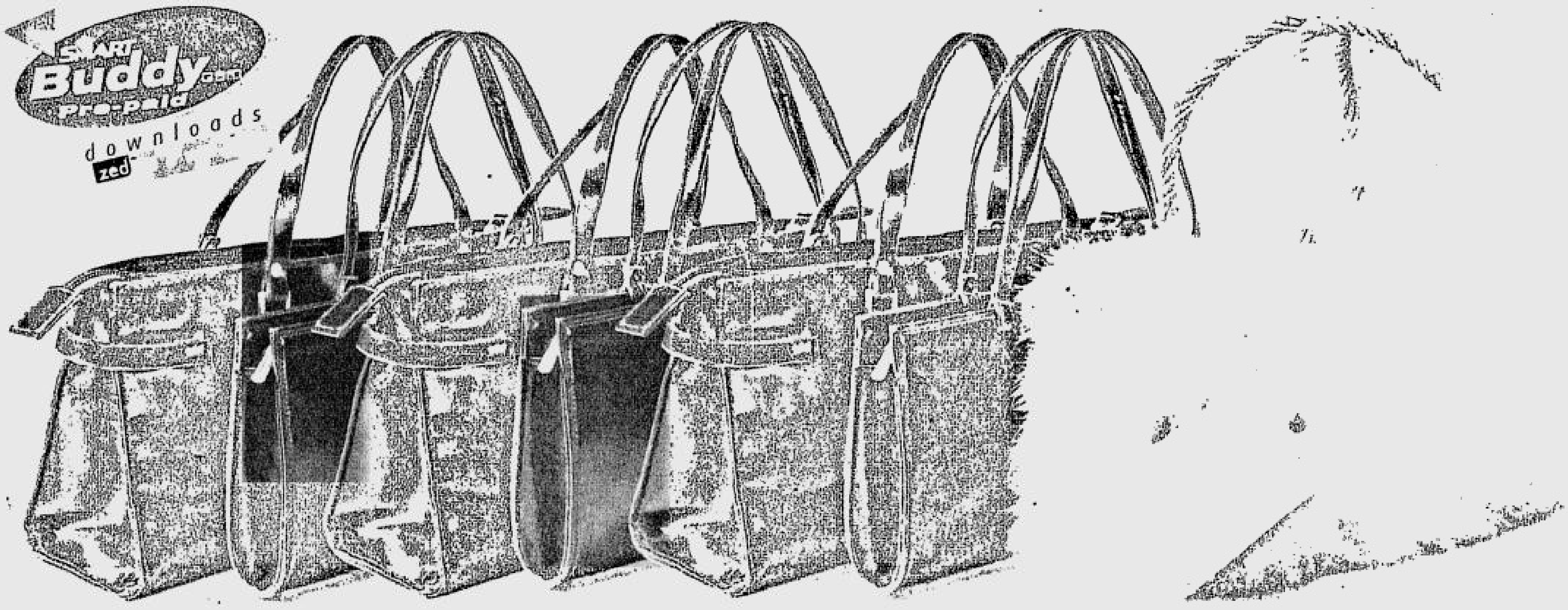
E-mail us a short paragraph why you love Incubus at contest2bu@yahoo.com. Don't forget your name, address, age and mobile phone number. Contest will run until March 10. Winners should present their ID when claiming tickets at the Jag Jeans boutique in Glorietta 1. Look for Jessie Coloma from Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.



Tickets for the Incubus concert are now available at all SM Ticketnet outlets and Jag Jeans boutiques at Glorietta 1, Robinsons Ermita and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall. Ticket prices are reserved seats at P1,950 and standing at P950 and P550. For sales and inquiries, call SM Ticketnet at 9115555 or Jag Jeans Glorietta 1 at 8171158.

The concert is presented by Smart Buddy, LoneStar Ultra and Jag Jeans and is also brought to you by Petron Blaze, Converse, official music channel MYX and participating radio stations Magic 89.9 DWTM, 103.5 K-Lite, RX 93.1, Joey 92.3 and NU107.

Join the Incubus Worldwide Fan Conference on Feb. 27 by logging onto their website www.enjoyincubus.com at 6:30 a.m.



your ow nd! Download the m

ing ton

Hey Ya	*Outkast*	**TONE HEYYA**
Toyang	*Eraserheads*	**TONE TOYANG**
Dawson's Geek	*Busted*	**TONE DAWSONG**
My Favorite Things	*Outkast*	**TONE MYFAVE**
Let Her Down Easy	*Ronan Keating*	**TONE LETHER**
I Found Someone	*Cher*	**TONE FOUNDS**
Guilty	*Blue*	**TONE GUILTY**
Sexed up	*Robbie Williams*	**TONE SEXED**
New Deep	*John Mayer*	**TONE NEWDEEP**
Something's Missing	*John Mayer*	**TONE SMISSING**

Get the hottest ring tone automatically delivered to your cell phone weekly.
Type **POWTONE** and send to **288**
Featured tone of the week: **Powerless** by **Nelly Furtado**.
Exclusively available via POWTONE.

LOGO MYHEART
LOGO PLUS
LOGO SLEEPY
LOGO READY
LOGO TAKE
LOGO HIPCAT
LOGO HART
LOGO WINK2
LOGO DUDE1
LOGO THINKING1
LOGO WHALES
LOGO 4LIFE
LOGO ALIENS
LOGO CATHART

miss kita friend
PIC MISSPUP
PIC KOALA1
PIC KISSME
PIC LUVGIRL1
I ♥ U
PIC LBUG
PIC BIRDIES1
be mine 4-ever
PIC BMINE
PIC AGAIN1
PIC GAME1
Macho Gwapito
PIC MGWAPITO
PIC SILIP
PIC UPSIDE

CAL GAL
CAL GUY
FEB 25 WED
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SMART Simply Amazing!

DUNKIN' DONUTS
Donut de Fruta
P99 a dozen
New Flavor!
avocado
Promo period is from Feb. 16 to March 31, 2004.
Available only at participating outlets nationwide. Not valid for other promotions and discounts.

2bU! LIFESTYLE

To be you!

For feedback, text us at (0918) 382-4061 or (0916) 200-1160 or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

SUPER 2bU! Read more, party more.

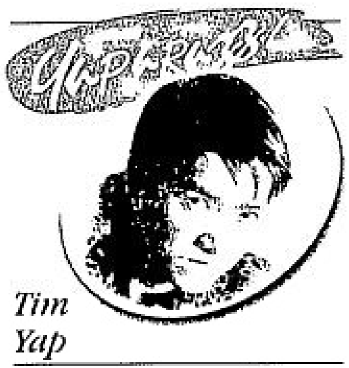
Bibliophiles raise the roof

The INQUIRER Readers Club becomes a literate and rewarding way to party

RELEASE ME, says Toti Wong of Adidas.

RATED R. Radha and the 7 Shots of Wisdom

LOOK, LUKE! Luke Mejares croons his way to our hearts.



Tim Yap

"THUMP, thump, thump..." With the pumpin' music coming from the NBC Tent, you'd think it was just another rave at the Fort area—only this time, it was more than just a gathering of beer- and martini-chugging party folks. Partyphiles this side of town raised the roof, snapping their fingers on one hand and holding on to a copy of the INQUIRER on the other.

Okay, well, the INQUIRER was kinda mandatory since it was being given out at the gate upon registration. But hey, it was all part of this paper's noble attempt to get the teens, the twentysomethings and beyond to do their own thing, and read. It sounds as simple as changing your undies or taking a shower or not talking while your mouth is full, but for some people (you know who you are), it still takes so much effort to flip through a picture book. In this day and age when gadgets and gizmos are taking over the world, the old school gift of reading ("Read more, be more," as another INQUIRER campaign simply puts it) is more than threatened.

Although we're No. 1, we do not have our noses upturned while patting ourselves at the back. And so, the guys at Inq7.net formed the INQUIRER Readers Club—a consortium of like-minded people (you, me, us) who love to read "balanced news and fearless views," who like to keep abreast of youth issues and make a stand, and who are addicted to empowerment and change.

2bU! and Super

With that now comes rewards! Yup, you heard that right. You can get rewards for reading 2bU!, the teen lifestyle section of PDI (in case you've been hiding in the basement for years) and Saturday Super! (your hip and happening Saturday Special section)—both devoted to youth, en-

BIBLIOPHILES/ D3

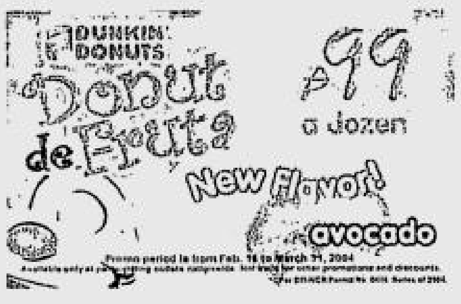
HOTLEGS fashion in action

INQ7 movers and shakers in full party mode

PHOTOS: EGAY MONTANA

MEN'S SALE
MEN'S LEATHER ACCESSORIES | NOW THRU FEBRUARY 29, 2004
up to 50% off on great selections
FREE faux leather card case for a minimum purchase worth P500 of men's leather accessories in a single receipt
SM
We've got it all for you! DEPARTMENT STORE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE


DUNKIN' DONUTS
Donut de Fruta
₱99 a dozen
New Flavor! avocado
Promo period is from Feb. 16 to March 31, 2004

2bU! LIFESTYLE
To be you!

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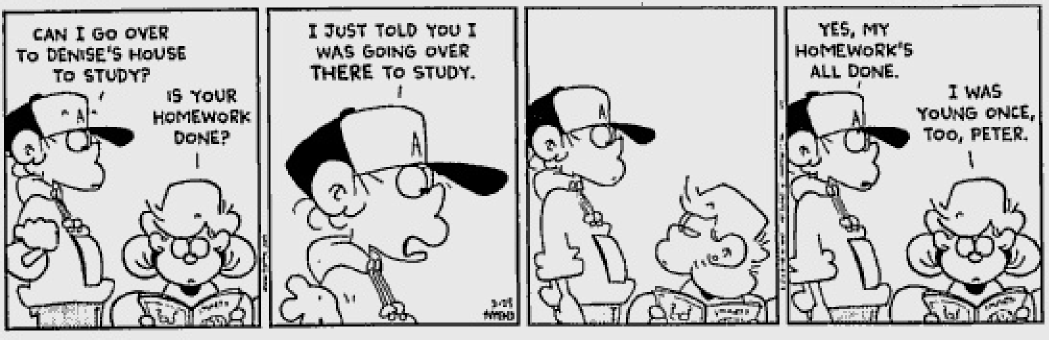
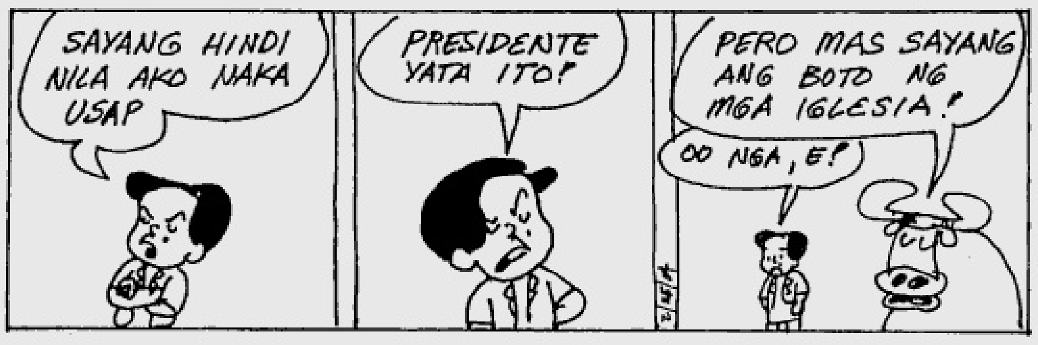
NOW THRU FEBRUARY
FREE
faux leather card case for a minimum purchase worth ₱500 of men's leather accessories in a single receipt
SM
We've got it all for you! DEPARTMENT STORE

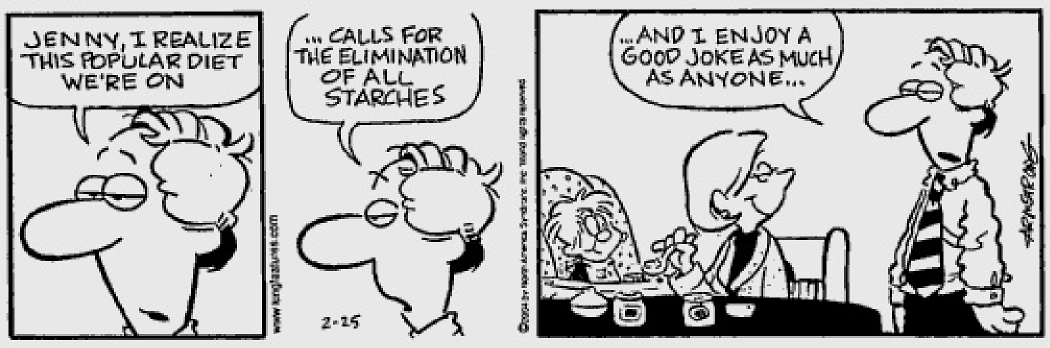
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


CAN I GO OVER TO DENISE'S HOUSE TO STUDY?
IS YOUR HOMEWORK DONE?
I JUST TOLD YOU I WAS GOING OVER THERE TO STUDY.
YES, MY HOMEWORK'S ALL DONE.
I WAS YOUNG ONCE, TOO, PETER.

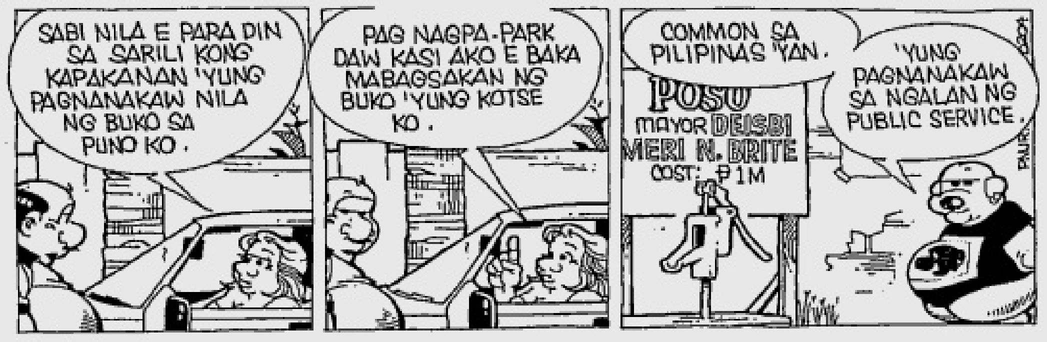
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


SAYANG HINDI NILA AKO NAKA USAP
PRESIDENTE YATA ITO!
PERO MAS SAYANG ANG BOTO NG MGA IGLESIA!
OO NGA, E!

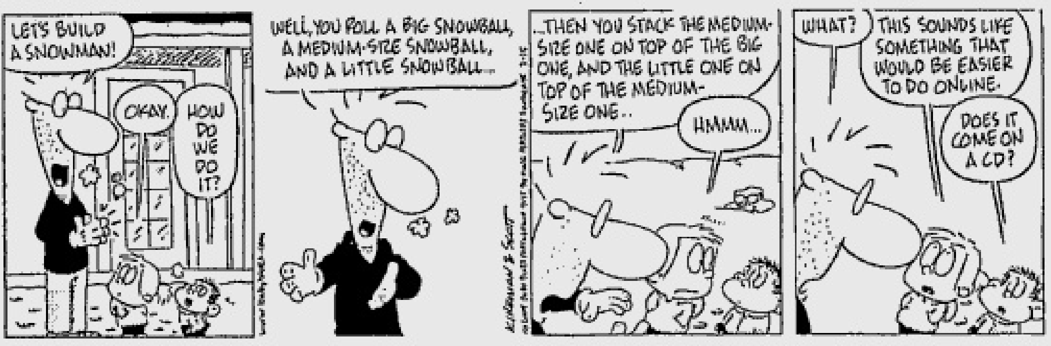
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


JENNY, I REALIZE THIS POPULAR DIET WE'RE ON
... CALLS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ALL STARCHES
...AND I ENJOY A GOOD JOKE AS MUCH AS ANYONE...
2-25

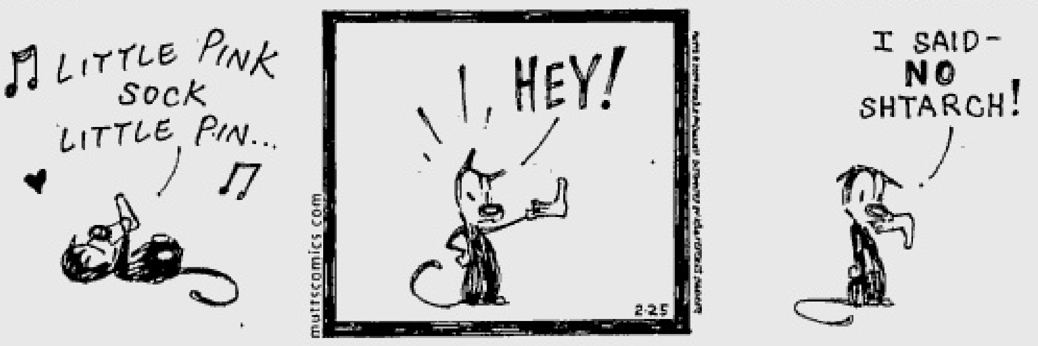
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


SABI NILA E PARA DIN SA SARILI KONG KAPAKANAN 'YUNG PAGNANAKAW NILA NG BUKO SA PUNO KO.
PAG NAGPA-PARK DAW KASI AKO E BAKA MABAGSAKAN NG BUKO 'YUNG KOTSE KO.
COMMON SA PILIPINAS 'YAN.
'YUNG PAGNANAKAW SA NGALAN NG PUBLIC SERVICE.
POSO
MAYOR DEISBI MERI N. BRITE
COST: ₱1M

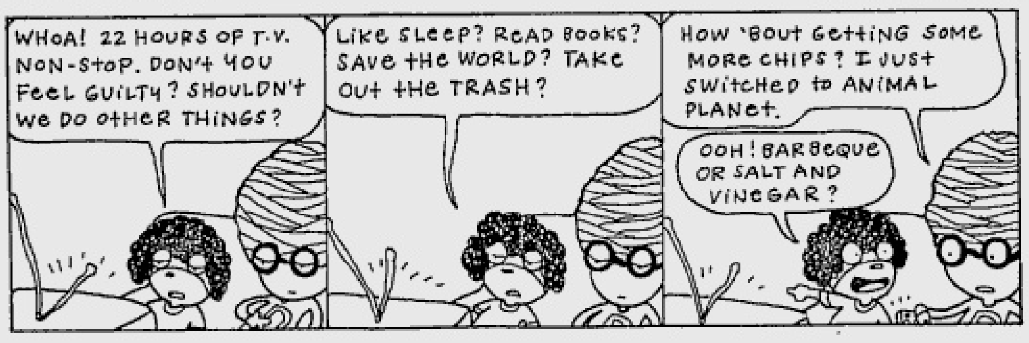
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


LET'S BUILD A SNOWMAN!
OKAY.
HOW DO WE DO IT?
WELL, YOU ROLL A BIG SNOWBALL, A MEDIUM-SIZE SNOWBALL, AND A LITTLE SNOWBALL...
...THEN YOU STACK THE MEDIUM-SIZE ONE ON TOP OF THE BIG ONE, AND THE LITTLE ONE ON TOP OF THE MEDIUM-SIZE ONE..
HMMM...
WHAT?
THIS SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE EASIER TO DO ONLINE.
DOES IT COME ON A CD?

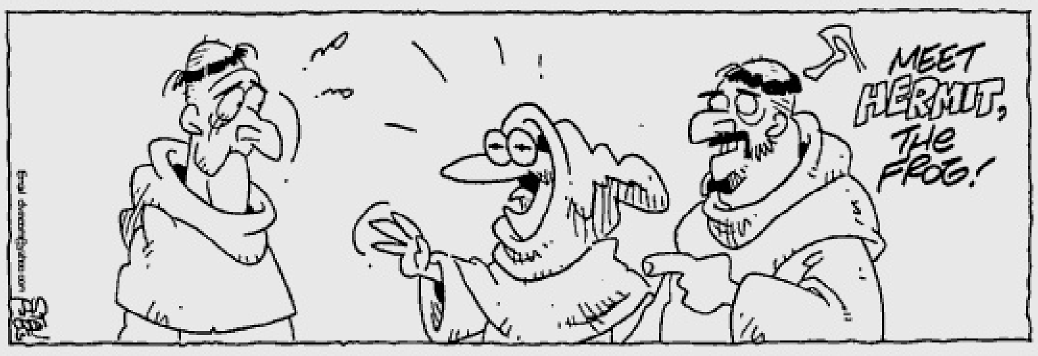
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


♫ LITTLE PINK SOCK LITTLE PIN...
HEY!
I SAID- NO SHTARCH!
mutts comics.com
2-25

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHOA! 22 HOURS OF T.V. NON-STOP. DON'T YOU FEEL GUILTY? SHOULDN'T WE DO OTHER THINGS?
LIKE SLEEP? READ BOOKS? SAVE THE WORLD? TAKE OUT THE TRASH?
HOW 'BOUT GETTING SOME MORE CHIPS? I JUST SWITCHED TO ANIMAL PLANET.
OOH! BARBEQUE OR SALT AND VINEGAR?

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MEET HERMIT, THE FROG!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are faithful and very devoted to your cause in life. You are also generous and giving. You command respect, in large part because you are confident. You are serious about your commitment to social causes. You will always choose to walk the high road. The year ahead is highly social, friendly and focused on partnerships.
Birthdate of: Téa Leoni, actress; Auguste Renoir, painter; Sally Jesse Raphael, TV talk-show host.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Move forward with major plans that involve the government or large institutions. Your private, inner belief in yourself makes you strong and positive today.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Someone older might give you serious advice today that is worth listening to. Be open. After all, you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Financially speaking, you feel conservative and practical today. You will make thrifty choices because you want to save money for the future. (You can trust your instincts.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22)
This is an excellent day to make long-range plans. Your approach is practical, logical and even frugal. Nothing you do today will be frivolous or wasteful.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): If you can save money today, you will derive long-term benefits. Any shared enterprise or matters having to do with joint ownership can benefit you now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone wiser, older or more experienced can give you good advice today. Be patient; listen to what is said. Never underestimate what you can learn from someone older than you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Discussions with bosses, parents and important people go extremely well today. People are impressed with your patience, diligence and readiness to work hard.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Because you're highly disciplined today, you can channel your energies practically anywhere. That's because there's a close relationship between you and anything that you do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Look at your own situation today and your daily habits. Work on anything that is important to you so that you can make practical improvements.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a great day to do work that requires discipline and self-control. In fact, others will be impressed with your self-denial.

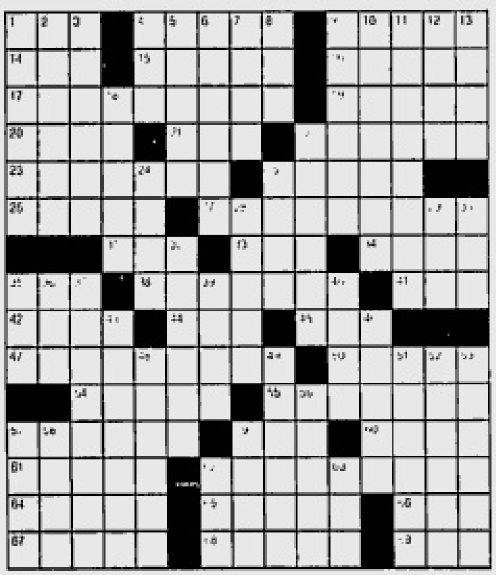
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You are bothered by waste today. You want to make the maximum use of everything that you own. After all, this is only sensible and wise. Because of this, you'll scrutinize and sort through what you own to make the most of what you have.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Today you want to organize your affairs so that they're more ordered in a practical way. You want your efforts to achieve lasting results. You realize that a drop in the bucket each day finally fills the pail.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 TV network
4 Accumulate
9 Type of sword
14 Gradual bend
15 Stray calf
16 Blue shade
17 Culture Club's front man
19 Gymnast Comaneci
20 Singer Falana
21 Bear's lair
22 Displayed cards, as in pinochle
23 Solar event
25 "The Ballad of __ Jones"
26 Stratified rock
27 Insufficiencies
31 America's uncle
33 Ms. Thurman
34 Japanese wrestling
35 Escort's offer
38 Detroit's lewd rapper
41 Slangy affirmative
42 Knights' addresses
44 Old card game
45 Intention
47 Macaulay Culkin movie
50 Rustler's rope
54 Religion of the Koran
55 Rabin of Israel
57 In general
59 Writer's tool
60 Carvey or Ivey
61 Clarinetist Shaw
62 Hip-hop rapper Sean Combs
64 Minuscule
65 Integra maker
66 Raw mineral
67 Round dances
68 Pass along
69 Roll of money

DOWN
1 Steel ropes
2 Decorative pin
3 Partner of Charybdis
4 Fruit beverage
5 Up and down dispositions
6 Concurs
7 Autograph
8 Witness
9 Most rational
10 Flowering shrubs
11 Legendary blues guitarist
12 Canal of song
13 __ my lips!
18 Devers and Parent
22 Shaken instrument
24 Mountain tip
25 Italian lake
28 Second-largest Great Lake
29 Aussie bird
30 Dunk, as a donut
32 "The Harp Weaver" poet
35 Fire flakes
36 __ de Janeiro
37 "Kyrie" group
39 Destine to tragedy
40 Celtic attire
43 Provencal verse
46 Miata maker
48 Bowling lanes
49 Real looker
51 Follow in secret
52 __ Day O'Connor
53 Approved
56 Red beginning?
57 Alg. or trig.
58 Sandwich cookie
59 Brownish purple
62 Golf score
63 Calendar unit



By Sheryl Scott
Akron, OH
2/25/04

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

G	A	B	L	E	■	S	L	I	M	■	D	A	H	L
O	R	I	E	L	■	T	U	N	A	■	A	R	E	A
A	L	L	E	Y	C	A	T	S	T	E	V	E	N	S
D	O	E	S	■	O	R	E	■	E	V	I	N	C	E
■	■	■	■	M	O	T	■	C	R	I	T	T	E	R
H	O	S	T	E	L	■	R	O	I	L	■	■	■	■
I	G	L	O	O	■	Z	I	M	A	■	S	E	R	E
G	R	A	Y	W	O	L	F	B	L	I	T	Z	E	R
H	E	W	S	■	P	O	L	O	■	C	O	R	A	L
■	■	■	■	F	E	T	E	■	B	E	W	A	R	E
B	R	A	V	E	R	Y	■	C	O	D	■	■	■	■
A	U	R	O	R	A	■	B	U	M	■	T	R	U	E
B	R	O	W	N	B	E	A	R	B	R	Y	A	N	T
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S	L	E	D	■	E	L	S	E	■	T	E	E	T	H

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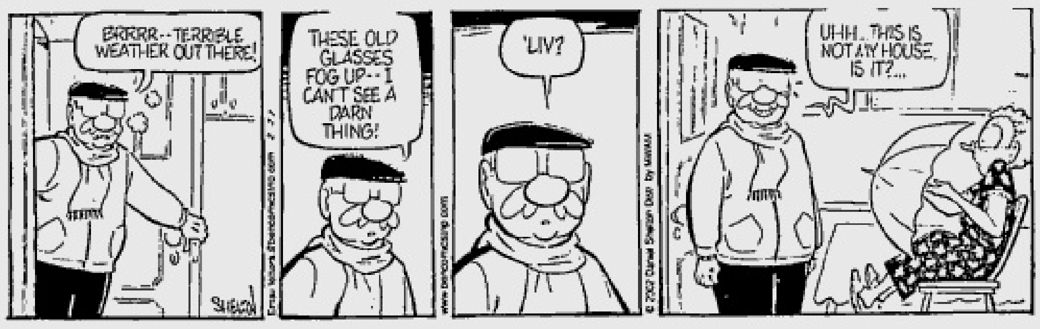
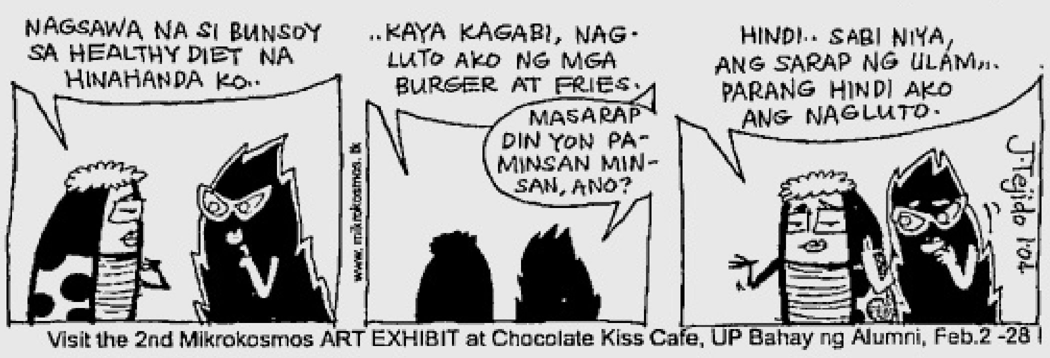
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


BRRRR--TERRIBLE WEATHER OUT THERE!
THESE OLD GLASSES FOG UP--I CAN'T SEE A DARN THING!
'LIV?
UHH.. THIS IS NOT MY HOUSE, IS IT?...

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAGSAWA NA SI BUNSOY SA HEALTHY DIET NA HINAHANDA KO..
..KAYA KAGABI, NAGLUTO AKO NG MGA BURGER AT FRIES.
MASARAP DIN YON PAMINSAN MINSAN, ANO?
HINDI.. SABI NIYA, ANG SARAP NG ULAM... PARANG HINDI AKO ANG NAGLUTO.
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J. Tejido '04

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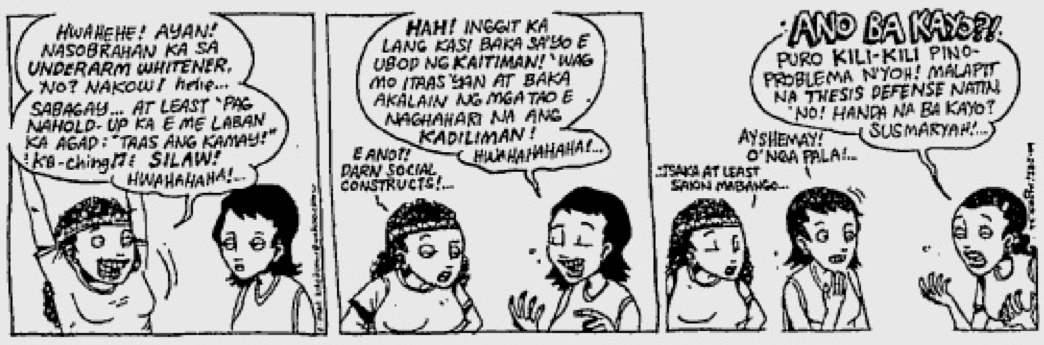
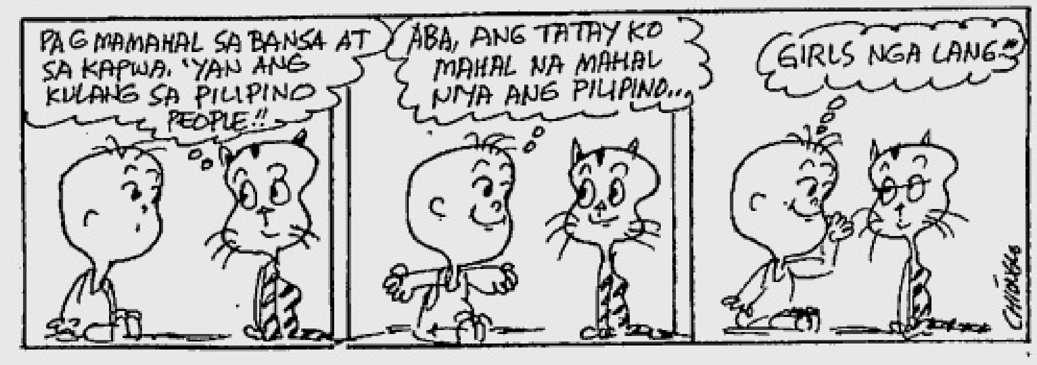
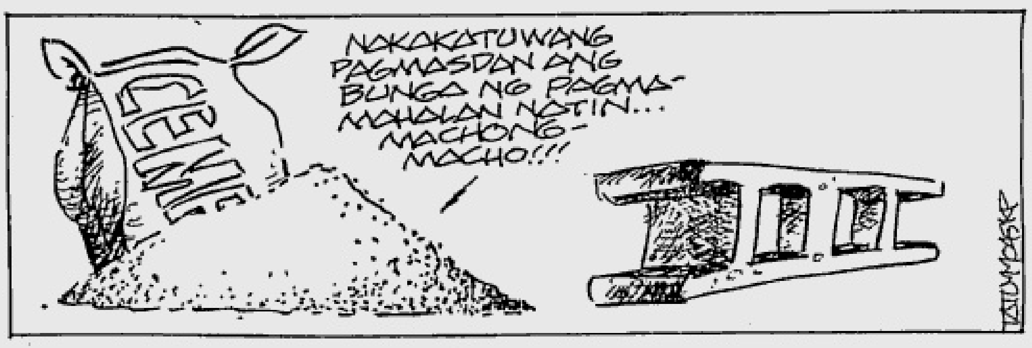
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HWAHEHE! AYAN! NASOBRAHAN KA SA UNDERARM WHITENER. 'NO? NAKOW! hehe... SABAGAY... AT LEAST 'PAG NAHOLD-UP KA E ME LABAN KA AGAD: "TAAS ANG KAMAY!" KE-ching!! SILAW! HWAHAHAHA!...
HAH! INGGIT KA LANG KASI BAKA SA'YO E UBOD NG KAITIMAN! 'WAG MO ITAAS 'YAN AT BAKA AKALAIN NG MGA TAO E NAGHAHARI NA ANG KADILIMAN! HWAHAHAHAHA!...
E ANO?! DARN SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS!...
ANO BA KAYO?! PURO KILI-KILI PINOPROBLEMA N'YOH! MALAPIT NA THESIS DEFENSE NATIN 'NO! HANDA NA BA KAYO? SUSMARYAH!...
AYSHEMAY! O'NGA PALA!...
ITSAKA AT LEAST SAION MABANGO...

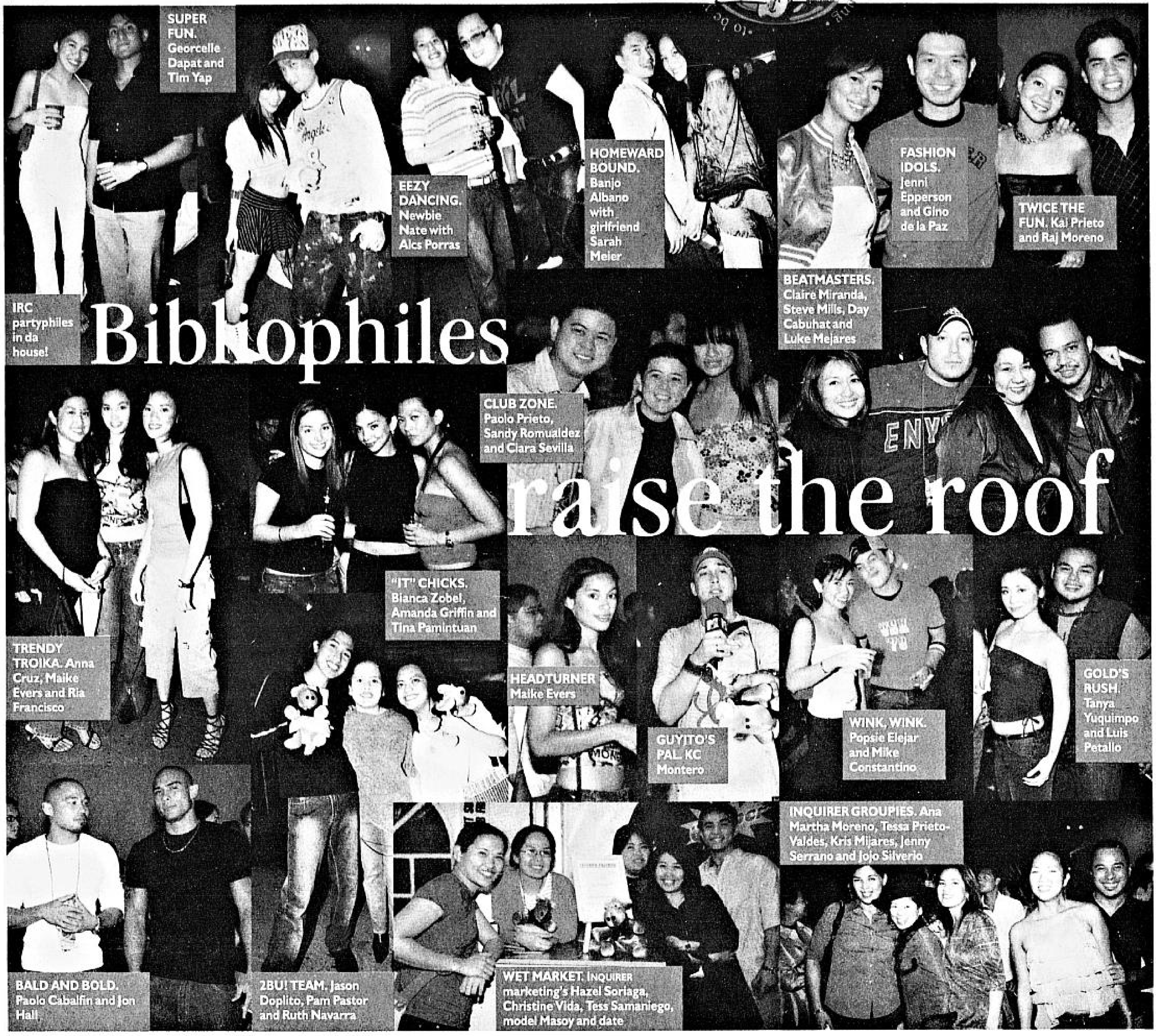
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PAG MAMAHAL SA BANSA AT SA KAPWA. 'YAN ANG KULANG SA PILIPINO PEOPLE!!
ABA, ANG TATAY KO MAHAL NA MAHAL NIYA ANG PILIPINO...
GIRLS NGA LANG!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NAKAKATUWANG PAGMASDAN ANG BUNGA NG PAGMAMAHALAN NATIN... MACHONG-MACHO!!!
CEMENT
TATUM/PAPU

Bibliophiles raise the roof



SUPER FUN. Georcelle Dapat and Tim Yap

EEZY DANCING. Newbie Nate with Alcs Porras

HOMEWARD BOUND. Banjo Albano with girlfriend Sarah Meier

FASHION IDOLS. Jenni Epperson and Gino de la Paz

TWICE THE FUN. Kai Prieto and Raj Moreno

IRC partyphiles in da house!

BEATMASTERS. Claire Miranda, Steve Mills, Day Cabuhat and Luke Mejares

CLUB ZONE. Paolo Prieto, Sandy Romualdez and Clara Sevilla

"IT" CHICKS. Bianca Zobel, Amanda Griffin and Tina Pamintuan

TRENDY TROIKA. Anna Cruz, Maike Evers and Ria Francisco

HEADTURNER Maike Evers

GUYITO'S PAL. KC Montero

WINK, WINK. Popsie Elejar and Mike Constantino

GOLD'S RUSH. Tanya Yuquimpo and Luis Petallo

INQUIRER GROUPIES. Ana Martha Moreno, Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Kris Mijares, Jenny Serrano and Jojo Silverio

BALD AND BOLD. Paolo Cabalfin and Jon Hall

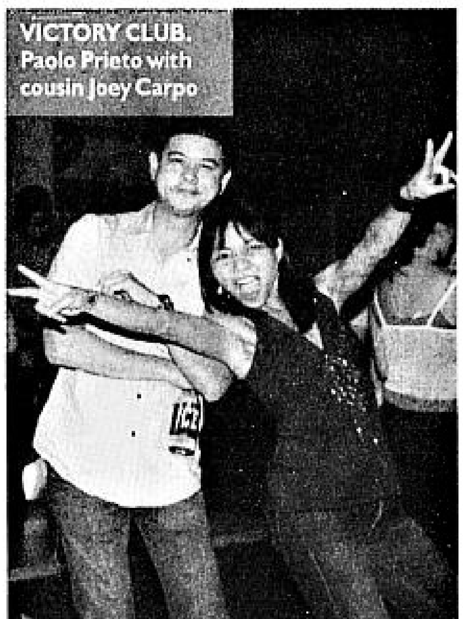
2BU! TEAM. Jason Doplito, Pam Pastor and Ruth Navarra

WET MARKET. INQUIRER marketing's Hazel Soriaga, Christine Vida, Tess Samaniego, model Masoy and date

From page D1

tertainment and pop culture—and everything else in between.

We've partnered up with establishments that are most appealing to you and me. A Super! shortlist includes Quantum Amusement Center, Q Power Station, Club Synergy, Mossimo branches in Metro Manila, Popeye's Chicken and Biscuits, Urban Spa (fifth floor of Shangri-La mall), Chris Sports Plaza and the Ayala Cinemas. As we go to press, more establishments are joining the club—to give you, our readers, a little "thank you" for your support.



VICTORY CLUB. Paolo Prieto with cousin Joey Carpo

POWERBOY Greg Martin showing his breakdancing savvy

One of the rewards just happened last month, with the city's hot and hip set in full attendance (events for members is just one of the many, many perks). All that partyphiles had to do was to flash their invitation and their IRC virtual cards for free entrance.

That night, DJ **Steve Mills** hogged the microphone as he made a roll call of the night's performers: **Trina Juco** started the evening with her cool lullabies, followed by 7 Shots of Wisdom's unique brand of R&B. **Luke Mejares** rocked the house and made everyone dance. Release and **Radha** made hips gyrate and made hands fly up in the air. DJ **Olie** and Flavastreet took turns MC-ing for the first batch of IRC (INQUIRER Readers Club—and don't ya forget it) members.

Party people in da house

Later, a break dance showdown erupted in the middle of the dance floor. One head spin after another, **Tessa Valdes** looked at the guys with wonder, "Wow, that's even more than advanced yoga!" Hmmm, I think Tessa has found a new thing to conquer.

Inq 7's **Paolo Prieto**, the man behind it all, made sure that all the guests were having a ball. Sister prexy **Sandy Romualdez** watched the predominantly young crowd and thought of more ways of making the INQUIRER youth brands better.

"Wazzup, party people?!" And they grooved the night away. MTV VJ **KC Montero** was going around for a "Be Seen" segment. "This pah-tee is so jampacked!" as he went around interviewing the INQUIRER readers slash partyphiles present at the members only affair.

The crowd was a good mix of uptown chicks and downtown scenesters. The troika of hip readers included **Bianca Zobel**, **Amanda Griffin** and Super! columnist **Tina Pamintuan**, who all looked hot, hot, hot, while **Paolo Cabalfin** and **Jon Hall** flexed their muscles while having drinks at the bar with model **Maike Evers**. Shopping queen **Jenni Epperson** looked hip in hot pink while Super's **Gino de la Paz** sizzled in red. It was 2bU! beauty columnist **Lora Gahol**'s birthday that night so she partied away with fellow 2bU! columnist **September Mahino** and friends **Crystal Rebucas** and **Beia Formoso**, also a 2bU! and Super! contributor. "It" chick **Sarah Meier** ran around with her homeboys while the 2bU! team of **Pam Pastor**, **Jason Doplito** and **Ruth Navarra** danced near the stage. The guest list shimmered, sparkled and sizzled.

Wanna join the party? Just keep reading this paper—and log on to www.inq7.net/irc for free membership.

See you at the Club!

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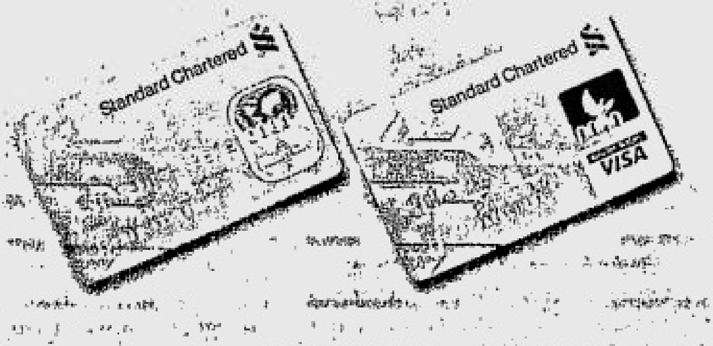
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Notes of a parliamentary debate virgin

STORY ON PAGE E2

The third INQUIRER debating championship among college students was a showcase of student wit, brilliance and quick thinking

I like "I," tanggal ang pagod!
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1 It Might Be You
Stephen Bishop
TONE MYTBU

2 Olso-olso
Bayani Agbayani
TONE OTSO

3 Forever's Not Enough
Sarah Geronimo
TONE 4EVERSNOT

4 Happy
Rolling Stones
TONE HAPPY

5 Where Is The Love
Black Eyed Peas
TONE WERISLUV

6 Maybe
Enrique Iglesias
TONE MAYBE

7 I'll Be
Edwin McCain
TONE IBE

8 Toxic
Britney Spears
TONE TOXIC

9 214
Rivermaya
TONE 214

10 Spaghetti Song
Sexbomb Dancers
TONE SPAG

11 Toyang
Eraserheads
TONE TOYANG

12 The Voice Within
Christina Aguilera
TONE VOICEW

13 Mr. Suave
Parokya Ni Edgar
TONE MRSUAVE

14 Ulan
Rivermaya
TONE ULAN

15 Let Me Be The One
Mandy Moore
TONE LETMEBE

16 Guilty
Blue
TONE GUILTY

17 Unwell
Matchbox 20
TONE UNWELL

18 Only Heart
John Mayer
TONE ONLYHEART

19 Iris
Googoo Dolls
TONE IRIS

20 God Is A DJ
Pink
TONE DJGOD

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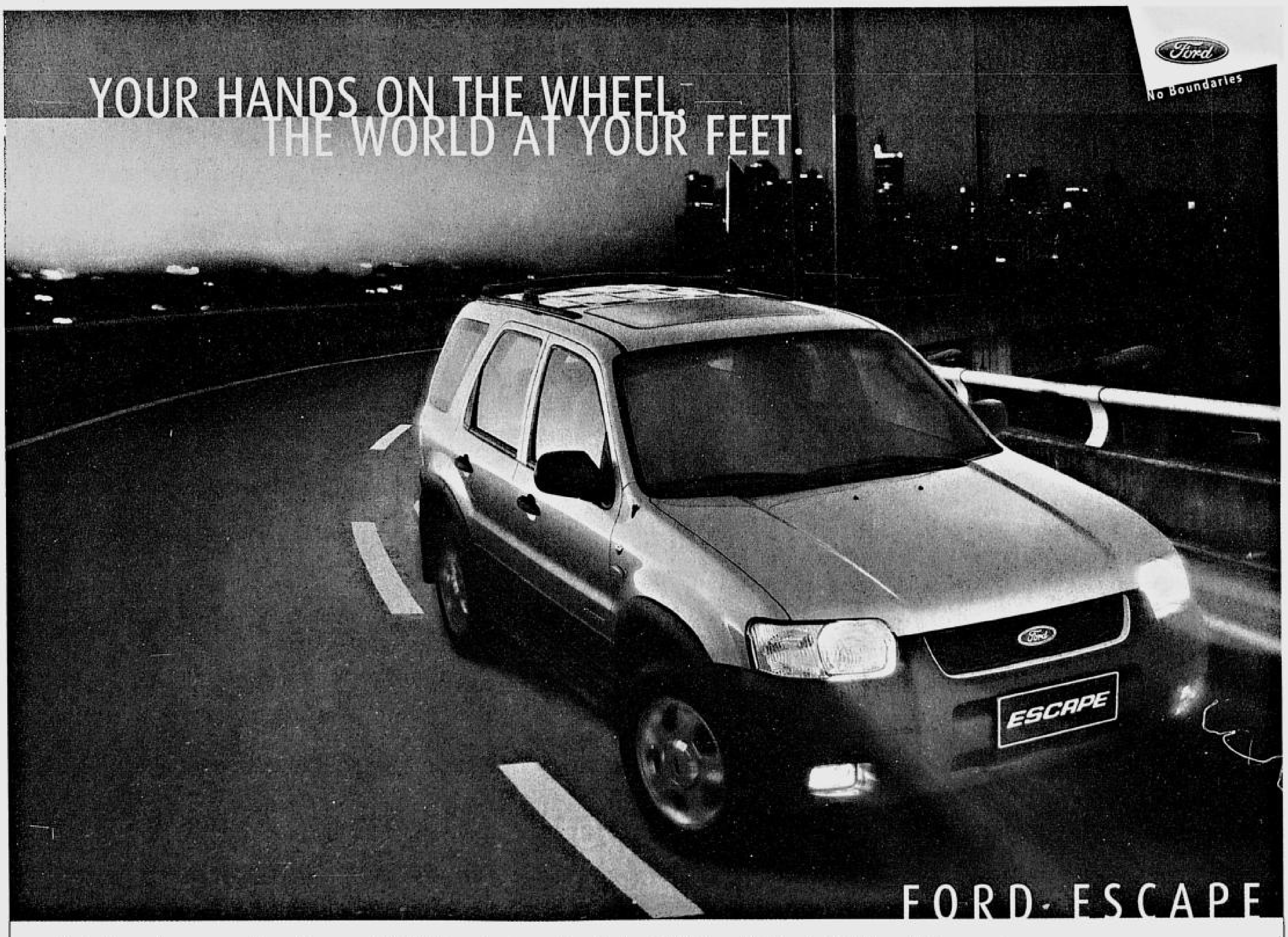

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DEBATERS enjoying dinner during the finals night

THE CHAMPS. Word wizards celebrate their win.

Notes of a parliamentary debate virgin

By Joan Ong
Contributor

"THE AFFIRMATIVE stands, madame chair, that elections harm democratic growth in post-conflict situations, taking for example post-war Iraq. Evidenced by the existence of minorities, not all sectors of the population can adequately participate in elections."

A chorus of "hear, hear!"

"Given the still volatile situation in Iraq even after the war, madame chair... "

Somebody from the other team stands. "Sir!"

"...existence of third party supervisors... "

"Point!"

"...some groups in Iraq don't have adequate political..."

"Sir!"

"Elections won't promote democratic ideals in Iraq... "

"Sir!"

"No, sit down!"

Clap! Clap! Somebody raises both of his arms, hands open.

"Madame chair and members of this house... "

No, that rough sketch of a rapid verbal exchange wasn't anything from an underground auction for chickens infected with bird flu nor a rerun of "The Practice."

It was a scene from a student debating tournament.

Final rounds

Last Feb. 3, I finally got the chance to go to school again almost a year since graduation. Never mind if it wasn't the school I graduated from. I was there to witness the final rounds of the Third INQUIRER Intercollegiate Debating Championship (IIDC).

The contest was exhilarating — students battling it out to win a point (which wasn't easy given that they were all good at it), me concentrating on each word that was being said (which wasn't easy given that the debaters talked a mile a minute) and me taking down notes for my article.

It was indeed a long way from Speech class. I even had to let one of the students explain to me, a parliamentary debate virgin, what PM, LO, OR and the rest of the letters written on the white board meant.

PM sure did stand for prime minister, but OR didn't stand for official receipt. It meant opposition reply.

Wit and charm required

Sponsored by the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER and the University of the Philippines' Debate Society (UPDS), the IIDC was a five-day event that saw over 60 teams made up of 300 students of different courses from over 25 colleges and universities in the Philippines flocking to the UP Diliman campus to participate in wide-ranging debates on a number of issues.

According to the Harvard Speech and Parliamentary Debate Society, the parliamentary debate was modeled after the British Parliament, wherein "a 'government' team (sans wigs) proposes a topic and an 'opposition' team rebuts the government's arguments... Wit, rhetoric, charm are highly valued... Heckling is not only allowed, it's encouraged!"

In this kind of debate, given that debaters have only a few minutes to prepare once they are given the topic, evidence is not required. Thus, to become a good debater, daily reading is very much a basic need.

Also in parliamentary debate, "debaters can rise during others' speeches" and challenge the arguments before a panel of judges called adjudicators. The adjudicators for this event were former debating champions chaired by chief adjudicator Diane Desierto.

The tourney itself was a grueling four-day process of elimination (excluding the first day for registration at Bahay ng Alumni).

UP Diliman's Team A (composed of Carl Ng, Ben Baltazar and Mark Lim) eventually bagged the championship trophy against Team A of Ateneo de Manila University, a regular IIDC contender. The motion was "This house believes that elections harm democratic growth in post-conflict situations."

Prior to the octofinals, Liberal Philippines, a local political magazine, hosted a youth forum featuring Senate president Franklin M. Drilon.

In his speech, the Senate president urged the youth to vote for the candidates who have the "so-called K: *kredibilidad*, *kagalingan*, *katapatan*, *kasipagan at higit sa lahat*, *konsensiya* (credibility, ability, loyalty, industriousness and most of all, conscience)."

Party time

Midway through the tournament, a Break Night Party sponsored by GenTXT was held at Pier One, Fort Bonifacio.

This gave the students a chance to mingle with new friends and unwind from the pressures of debating, as they were entertained by Migs and Miggy, one of UP's amateur bands.

The championship round, held at the Albergus Garden, Katipunan, was followed by a public speaking and stand-up comedy contest.

AdMU's Mahar Mangahas won the cash prize of P5,000 and a trophy, while June Arvin Gudoy of Mariano Marcos State University snared the award for People's Choice Best Public Speaker.

His best shot? "A man was imprisoned for calling Erap an idiot. He was jailed not for slander, not for libel, but for revealing a state secret."

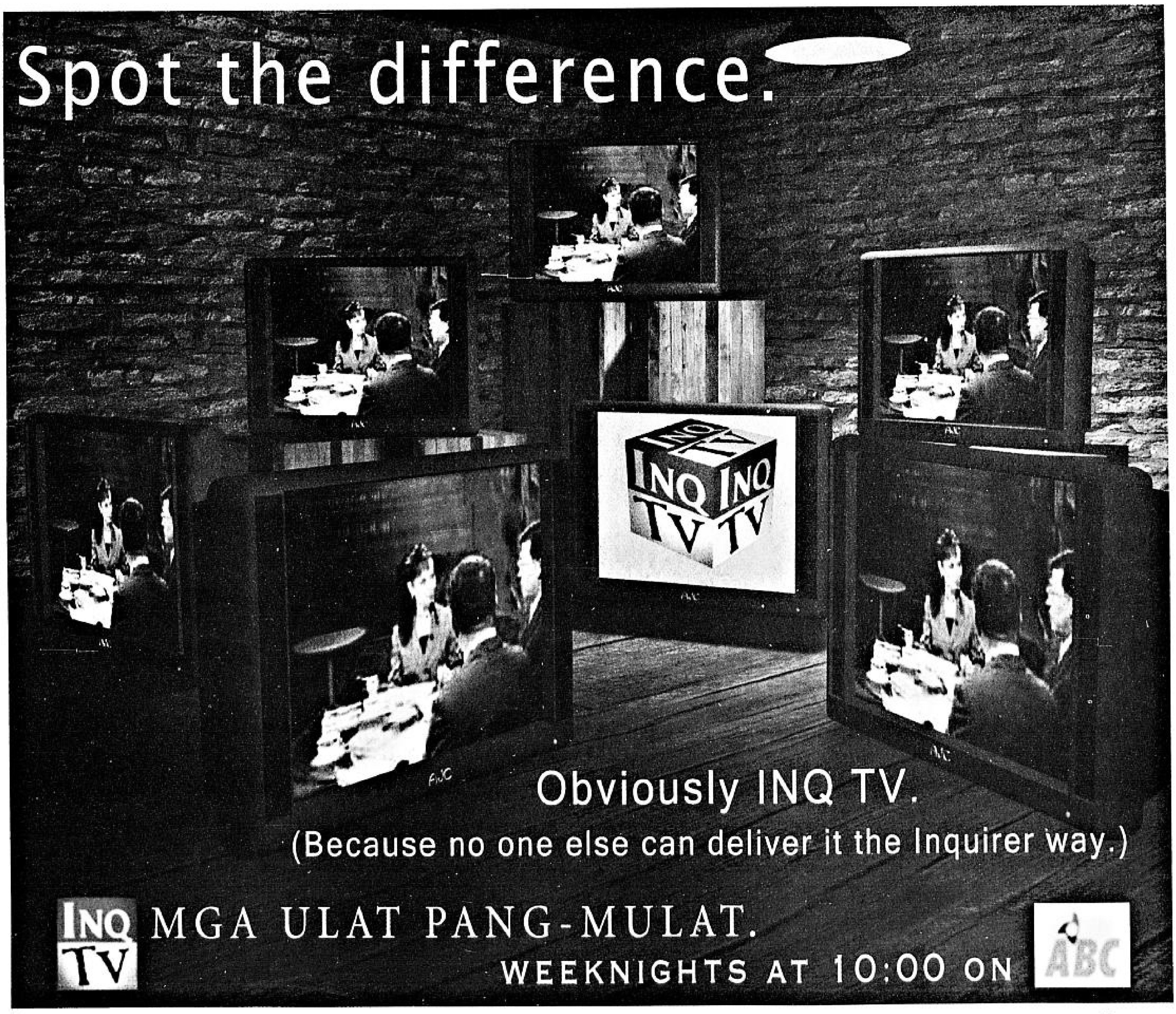
Other awards for the event were Best Provincial Team (Elias Omar Sana, Ariel Ian Clarito, Patricia Fernandez of Ateneo de Zamboanga), Best Rookie Team (Rhyan Uy, Glenn Tuazon and Sharmila Parmanand of AdMU), GenTXT Top Breaking Team (TL David, Miguel Jalandoni, Stephanie Tan of De La Salle University), Best Speaker of the Finals (Carl Ng) and Top Ten Best Speakers with TL David of DLSU bagging the prize.

In the end, the IIDC wasn't just about winning an argument and having a victory party; it was about spirit—the IIDC spirit.

As David Valdes, INQUIRER SVP for corporate services, said in his closing speech, the IIDC spirit was characterized by these three words: "Discernment, synergy and heart."

And now I rest my case.

IIDC's other sponsors included Liberal Philippines, INQUIRER's 2bU!, INQ7.net's You!, PLDT, Makati Business Club, GenTXT, Emerald Headway, Equitable PCI Bank, pop radio station Magic 89.9 and UP's School of Economics Student Council.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Vienna calling

Pastries, coffee, castles, Gustav Klimt, Mozart and opera are just a few of the Asian traveler's favorite things about the Austrian city

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

A PIVOTAL intersection between Eastern and Western Europe, Austria has always remained one of the continent's most popular destinations because of its rich cultural heritage and lush green scenery.

Having been very fortunate to visit Vienna twice in four months, I've listed 10 things that made me fall in love with the city.

1. Viennese pastries and coffeehouses. While Austria has always been renowned for its cakes and pastries, not too many people know the coffee-shop lifestyle has always been an integral part of Viennese life, dating back to the 17th century when retreating Turkish invaders left behind coffee beans from their provisions.

The Hotel Sacher Café, birthplace of the Sacher Torte, is always full; it is very difficult to get a table there. But upon sinking my teeth into their world-famous chocolate-apricot cake (which they served with a generous amount of unsweetened whipped cream on the side), it was definitely worth it.

Another sumptuous café and pastry shop combined in one, Demel has ironically always had a long-standing feud with Hotel Sacher Café as to who has the right to sell the Sacher Torte. It is said the chef who invented the concoction left Sacher to work in Demel.

Their cakes are absolutely divine—and their hot chocolate is the best I've ever tried. It's a bit pricey at 4.70 euros for a cup, but two Filipinos we had met told us it was a must-try, and they were right—it was perfect.

2. H&M. Though the popular Swedish clothing brand Hennes and Mauritz is widely dispersed in most of the Western capitals, some Eastern cities still don't have it, and when we went to Kartner Strasse/Stephensplatz, we saw that there were a good number of H&Ms in that area (even two H&Ms on one street) and we went mad-crazy shopping. We loved the stuff there and the prices were generally affordable.

3. Stephansplatz and Kartner Strasse. The heart of the city, Stephansplatz houses the magnificent St. Stephen's Cathedral, a 13th-century Gothic magnum opus with walls (both interior and exterior) adorned with intricate statues and lattices. The pedestrian-only Kärtner Strasse is lined with lavish shops, coffee houses and street entertainers, and is especially pretty during the Christmas season with all the scintillating Christmas lights and array of fresh, aromatic pine trees for sale.

4. Generally friendly and helpful Austrians. Though a lot of people had warned me that some Austrians could be hostile, I surprisingly had very pleasant experiences. 1) When my Taiwanese friends and I were plotting ways to take pictures of ourselves in front of Karlskirche, a 20-something Austrian walked up to us and asked us if we would like him to take our picture. 2) When we were looking at our map in front of the Hofburg Palace, a middle-aged man approached us and asked if he could help direct us and ended up giving us a brief history of the palace. 3) When the U-Bahn (metro) reached its stop, another 20-something reached forward to open the door for me. 4) The man beside me in the U-Bahn took the initiative to carry my luggage as I was having a bit of trouble repositioning it inside the train.

5. Youth hostels. Vienna is a pretty expensive city, especially when it comes to finding a place to stay, so I thanked my lucky stars for youth hostels. Though usually situated a bit far from the center, they are much cheaper and are accessible by either foot or train.

I stayed at the Westend City Hostel, a popular youth hostel, right next to the Westbanhof Station, which made it very convenient to get to the city center without having to walk much.

I had to share a coed room with 12 people and it cost me 14.50 euros per night, including breakfast. It was very clean and safe though as we each had our own lockers. The only catch is that there was only one bathroom, and sharing it with 12 strangers could drive one crazy at times.

6. Gustav Klimt. The Viennese painter was best known for his controversial "The Kiss"; his subjects were predominantly naked girls and skeletons basking in uninhibited expressions of sexuality. Today, he remains one of the world's greatest painters and a precursor of modern art.

7. Forex Austria. The big number of Pinoys in Vienna has put up the Forex Box, aka the *Balikbayan* Box. This trusted door-to-door service is very efficient, particularly for overseas Filipinos in neighboring countries, especially in Eastern Europe, who, like us, are outsmarting the overweight baggage problem. The coolest thing is that it has unlimited weight.

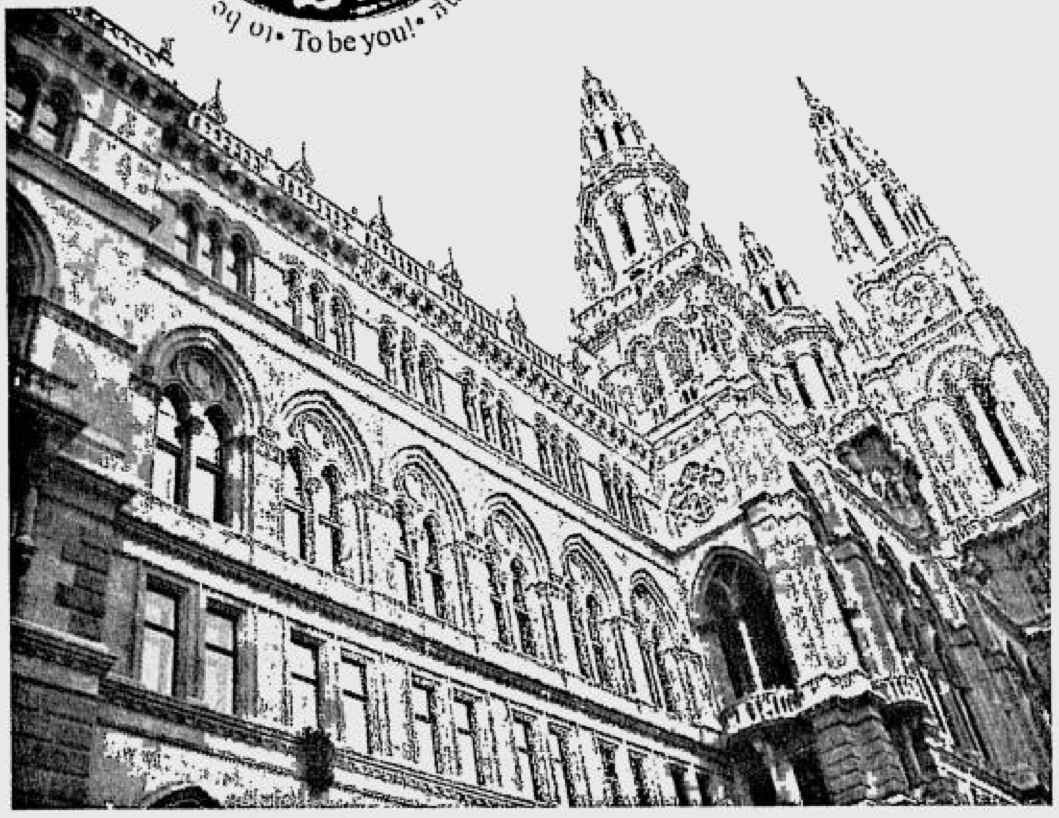
8. Schönbrunn Palace. The majestic 1,441-room palace, its breath-taking interiors with frescoed ceilings, crystal chandeliers and gilded ornamental frameworks, was the former summer residence of the imperial family. Enough said.

9. Rathaus, Burgtheater, Parlament, Karlskirche. The neo-Gothic Rathaus (city hall) is especially stunning during Christmas with the Christmas Market around its vicinity, selling all sorts of cute things and the most delicious baked potatoes and cheese hotdogs (Käsekrainer).

The Italian-Renaissance style Burgtheater is the most prestigious stage in the German-speaking world. The baroque Karlskirche (St. Charles' Church) is dedicated to St. Charles Boromeo and the Greek Revival-style Parliament is the seat of both the Upper and Lower Houses.

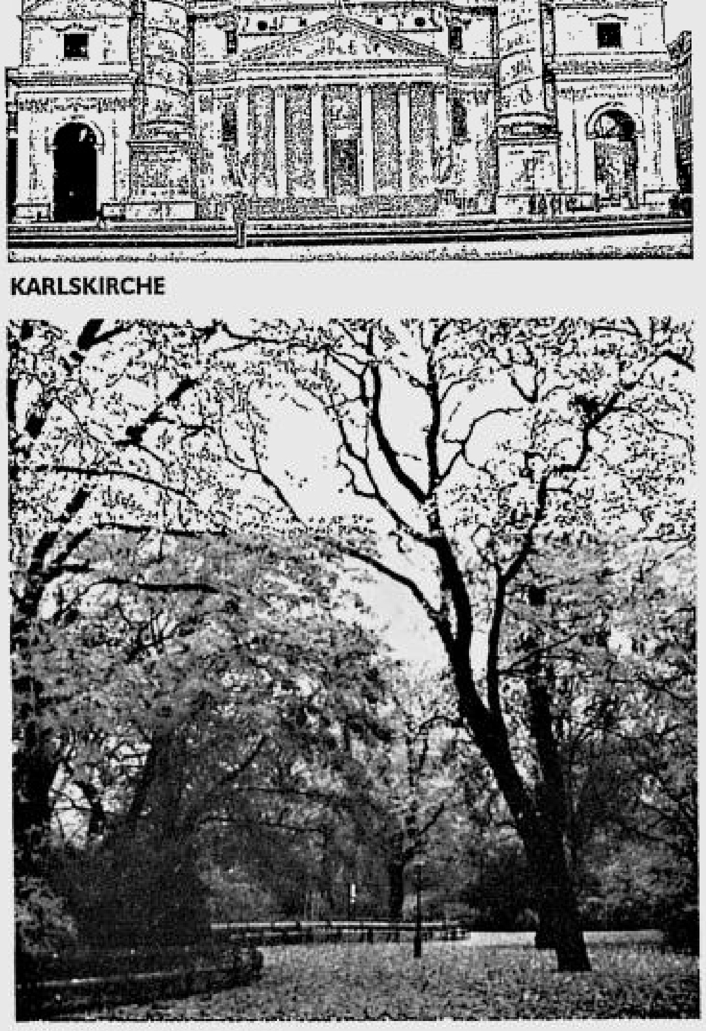
10. Everything Mozart. Even though Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was originally from Salzburg, he is reincarnated everywhere in Vienna—from Mozart chocolates to Mozart chocolate liqueur to Mozart stores to bewigged Mozart look-alikes selling concert tickets for the opera—the clearest emblem of Austrian pride.

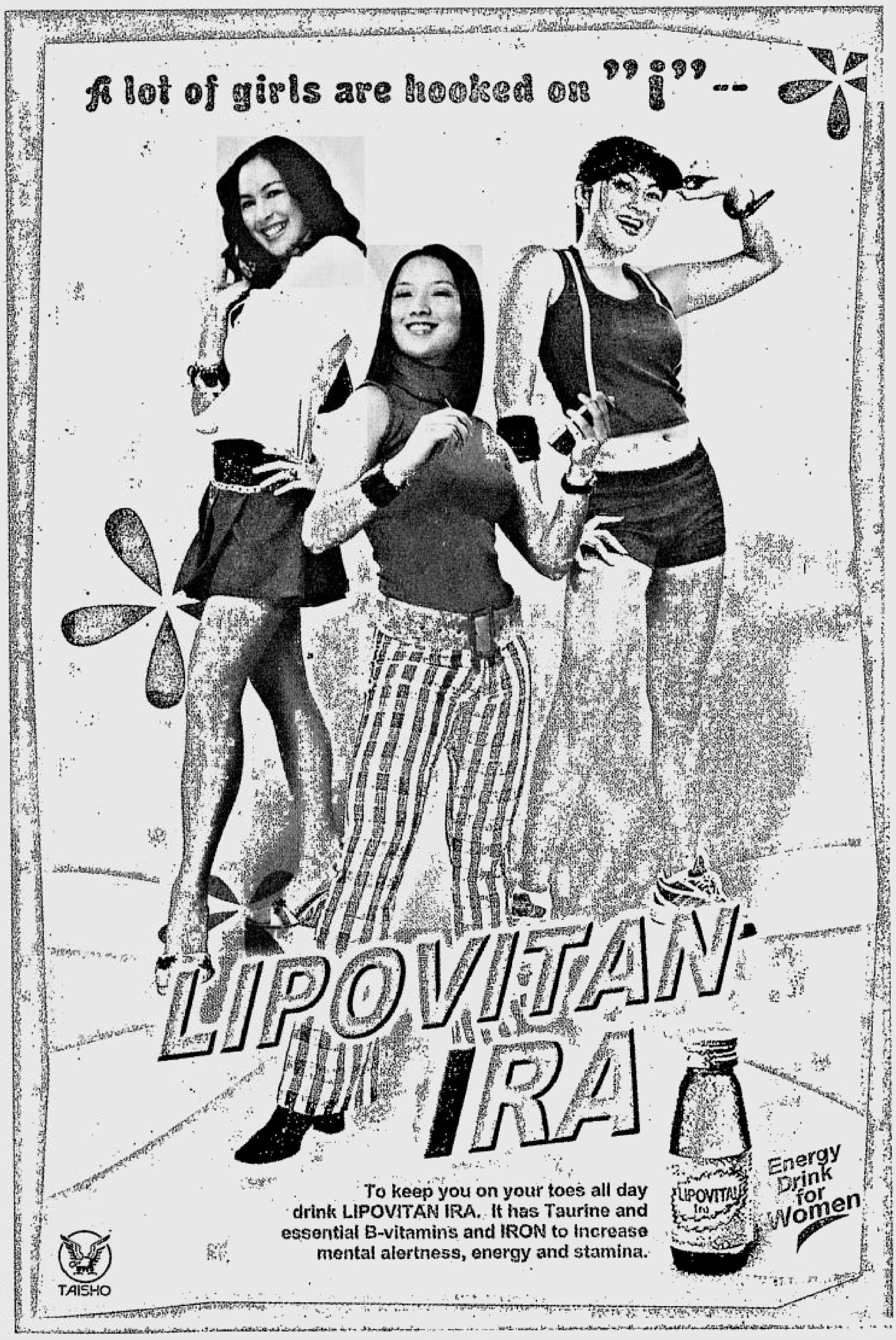
E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com


THE RATHAUS' neo-Gothic architecture

THE ALTAR of St. Stephen's Cathedral

KARLSKIRCHE


VIENNA'S luscious scenery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Poster boy of arm locks

By Linus Velasco Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

WELCOME to the Deftac Jujitsu finishing school. A place where technique and strategy rule the playing field, a place where brutish qualities—overblown egos, size and strength—are disciplined with an effortless choke or joint lock.

A place where its keeper, Francisco "Pichon" Garcia, reigns chief (at least, every MWF).

I was one of the first few to get served up the humbling defeat at the hands (and legs) of someone whose nickname stands for "dove" in Spanish.

Yeah, my ego is in shambles. It was in 1998 and I remember it like it was yesterday...

"Get his neck, man! Get his neck!" cheered and instructed one of my college friends. I had Pichon down to his rights, flat on his back and on his way to a tap-out. Or so I thought.

After all, if we were to go by the rules of logic, math and the sand-kicking beach bully, the bigger aggressor (me, 5'8", 185 lbs) would emerge triumphant over the smaller one (Pichon, 5'6", 142 lbs) in a scrap. Hands down.

But then, the world is an illogical and arithmetically challenged wasteland, and the sand-kicking beach bully got his just desserts when the 90-pound weakling discovered Charles Atlas' 60 days to bigger muscles ad.

Or in this case, Gracie jujitsu. Not that Pichon is a ninny. Far from that.

I discovered this when his legs sneaked around my neck and arm, fastening into a triangular lock and slowly inhibiting the blood flow to my brain. He did this all on his back. That's when I thought, "pick... him... up... and drop... him... on floor..." Too late.

I was a few grunts away from passing out and we realized that our public relations teacher had been inside the room for about five minutes. And boy, he didn't show any PR when he barked us out of the classroom.

That was my first lesson in the fine art of Brazilian jujitsu from Pichon Garcia, who was then a white belt. And yes, we were grappling on the classroom floor in between breaks. It was either that or studying.

Gracie jujitsu

That was then. Today, Pichon dons a purple belt, grapples on safe athletic mats but is still studying—jujitsu, that is.

A commercial model who has done ads for Del Monte, Smart and Kotex, Pichon is a dedicated Gracie jujitsu instructor under the Defense and Tactics Center (Deftac). He holds classes at the Red Corner fitness gym every MWF from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Having progressed from his white belt days 10 years ago, when he learned techniques only from tapes and Ultimate Fighting Championship videos, the nimble and technical grappler says the road to becoming a first-degree purple belt/teacher is strewn with a lot of hard work and pain.

There were times when he'd walk away from a sparring session with a limp or a sprain—or worse, wake up from one after passing out from a chokehold.

Francisco 'Pichon' Garcia is a commercial model and purple-belt jujitsu teacher. Dig that

PICHON, the tormentor—oops, mentor

But that's all cool, he says, "It's all part of the game."

Ask anyone who knows Pichon, and they'll be quick to respond with the word—you guessed it—jujitsu!

Pichon confirms that "Jujitsu is being me... it's my passion. But I'm just like everyone else. I just enjoy it. And I enjoy teaching."

And it's his love for the game that earned him the unofficial distinction of spokesperson for the art at Deftac. "There's pressure," he says, because he has to show and educate people that jujitsu is a safe sport for everyone.

No tough guy

Pichon at first glance may seem unsuitable for a sport where people get twisted into pretzel-like shapes. However, one round on the mat with him will quickly shatter that misconception.

"I like playing from the bottom," he says. "Being small, I always played from the guard."

That's exactly the beauty of the art. The guard, jujitsu's signature position, may look like the last hold any self-respecting guy would want to be caught in—because it looks like the, ahem, missionary position.

Practitioners are quick to explain, though, that from the guard, one can defeat an opponent with a myriad of chokes, arm and leg locks, using his own weight against the other.

It is through this position that Pichon shows the effectiveness of jujitsu. "It's a good thing that I'm small because people get to see the art at work (for the smaller guy)," he points out.

"It's quite easy to hold your own in a fight when you are well-trained. I feel confident knowing how to protect myself, but I never took jujitsu to be a tough guy."

Grueling training

It may seem like the next step for someone at his level is to jump in on the local no-holds-barred (NHB) bandwagon and show the Filipino fight fan his chosen style of pugilism.

However, NHB's golden boy slot will have to remain vacant for the time being. "I love NHB but I don't want to compete in it yet," he reveals. "I want to focus on jujitsu. I still have a lot to learn and I want to keep on teaching."

Currently, he puts himself through a grueling training schedule. He does jujitsu three times a week; wrestling, yoga (for flexibility) and capoeira (for dynamic movement) once a week; and weight training four times a week.

Competition and contentment

For someone who has one foot in the glitzy world of modeling and the other in the intense world of martial arts, Pichon's stature would make one wonder what his showbiz peers think of him.

"They just ask what it is," Pichon explains with a devil-may-care shrug. "They're just too busy they don't have time to get into it."

Having competed abroad, Pichon says that we still need a lot of catching-up to do, "but technique-wise, we're there."

For now, Pichon is content doing what he enjoys most—like catching me in another ego and bone crushing position—a jumping arm-bar (see pic where he's dangling from my arm. It's a lock hyper-extending the elbow. It's not fun)—and I'm tapping out.

Just like how I tapped out before in class. Only this time, it's his class and I'm the student. And he just took my butt to school... and took my lunch money. Damn.

THE JUMPING arm-bar

PHOTOS: JOHN PABALAN AND TIFFANY HIZON

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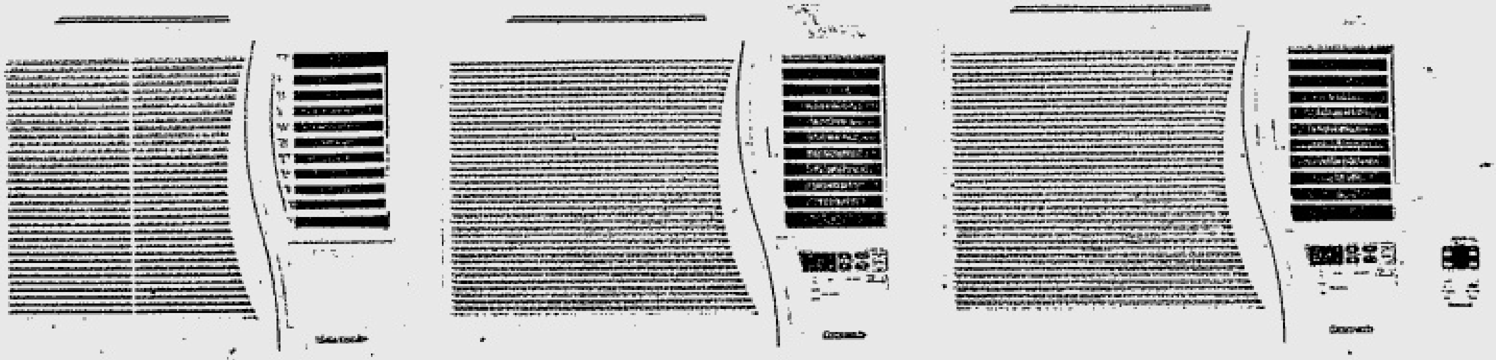

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Canon Taking the Canon Experience across all boundaries

Canon takes center stage at Photoworld Manila 2004

Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. (CMPI) takes center stage as it highlights its latest camera products and accessories at this year's Photoworld Manila 2004, happening from February 25 to March 1 at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati City.

Once again Canon will be parading its gamut of imaging products – including digital cameras, digital video cameras, bubblejet and photo printers, scanners, printer consumables and camera accessories – that are set to tap all sectors of the market, from the beginners up to the high-end, professional level.

According to Gelo Martinez, sales and marketing manager for CMPI's Consumer Imaging and Information Division, Canon is very keen on capturing all market sectors in providing them imaging and camera needs. "We want to help define for our customers what types of camera users are they, whether a professional, business prosumer (professional consumer), home user or traveler," he explained.

For this event, Martinez said that Canon has especially designed and conceptualized its booth to guide photo enthusiasts and onlookers in finding a camera that suits them. "Canon's long-term strategy is to offer digital cameras in every category at every price point."

Digital camera, digital video and printer experts will also be available to provide free consultation to help customers find the perfect camera for them.

Highly-anticipated

Among the latest products to be showcased at Photo World Manila is the highly anticipated EOS-1D Mark II, Canon's successor to its EOS-1D. Developed as Canon's pro-class digital SLR, the EOS-1D II offers more pixels and a faster response for freeze frame opportunities that just couldn't be missed.

Aimed at event photographers and professional photo-journalists, the state-of-the-art EOS-1D Mark II retains the excellent basic features and reliability of the EOS-1D while packing a high-speed CMOS sensor with 8.2 million effective pixels, 8.5 frames-per-second continuous shooting speed, an improved AF, new E-TTL II autoflash system, and Canon's newly developed DIGIC II digital imaging processor for high-speed and high-resolution performance. Photo enthusiasts can also expect to find the latest EF 28-300mm L IS U Lens, and EF70-300mm DO IS U Lens to satisfy their photography cravings.

Extra special promos and freebies limited only during Photoworld Manila 2004 are also up for grabs for Canon exhibit visitors and enthusiasts.

A loyal Canon user? Then register your product and get these exciting goodies:

- Free pack of ink and paper (HC361P) plus other giveaway items for CP-10 Card Photo Printer Users; and
- A free Canon EOS poster and Lens Interactive CD for EOS users.

Or if you're interested to become a Canon user, then take advantage of even more freebies:

- Free limited edition bag and book on Understanding Digital Photography for every purchase of any one of the following cameras – PowerShot A60, A70, A80; Digital IXUS i, Digital IXUS II, Digital IXUS 400; PowerShot S50, PowerShot G5; and CP200 and CP300 Card Photo Printers;
- Free leather case, IXUS metal neck strap, Digital Photography book and bag for every purchase of the Digital IXUS i, Digital IXUS II, and Digital IXUS 400;
- Free Prima BF-10 Film Camera for every PowerShot A300 purchase;
- Free leather case, mini tripod, Digital Photography book and bag for every PowerShot S50 purchase;
- Free mini tripod, advanced Digital Photography book and bag for PowerShot G5 purchase; and
- A buy 5 take 1 free on any CP consumables (CP10, CP100, CP200&CP300)

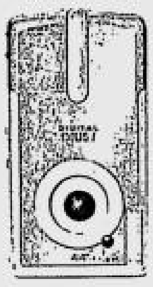
Worthwhile trade-ins and advance orders are also available, plus free test of the latest bubble jet printers.

Which kind of digital camera is best for me?

Like traditional 35mm film cameras, digital versions come in various sizes and configurations. There are fully automatic, point-and-shoot models for novices. Then there are higher-end units for experienced users desiring more manual and creative control. The general rule of thumb is the more manual features you have, the bigger the camera, the higher its price. Sizes can vary greatly, from credit card form factors to cameras bulky and heavy enough to require a strong shoulder. The camera you choose will depend greatly on your photographic needs and budgetary threshold. Here, we've identified four main types of camera users and the general characteristics of digital cameras suitable for each.

FOR TRAVELERS

Recommended Camera: Ultra Compacts

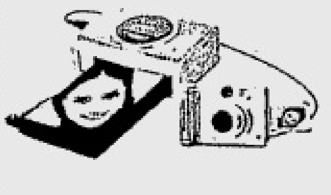


Traveling light is one of the top priorities of people on the go. The camera features to look out for include: ultra-compact form factor, long battery life, user friendly interface, automatic settings, and option to override with manual settings as necessary. Compact devices usually appeal to those who simply want a fuss-free, point-and-shoot camera that's easy to carry around. Capture resolution typically hovers around 1 to 2 megapixels but recent offerings have pushed the envelope to a whopping 5 megapixels for higher-end models. Compromises in certain features can be expected due to smaller form factor, though you will find most ultra-compacts sufficiently equipped for general photography purposes.

FOR HOME USERS

Recommended Camera: Mid-Range

Here, the digital camera will likely be used by the entire family, for activities ranging from a simple picnic outing to an overseas vacation. The digital camera should be easy to operate and come with good point-and-shoot functions and one-touch access preset settings. Option to output the digital images to a TV monitor would be useful so even the older folks in the family can enjoy viewing the shots with ease. Cameras in this category tend to offer better value for money because the emphasis is on function rather than form. Mid-range models may not be as portable as ultra-compacts, but for the same price, you can usually expect better features such as a higher-resolution sensor, more powerful optical zoom and bigger LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) screen. In most cases, you also get additional battery options, with AA-sized batteries commonly offerred as a convenient alternative to the standard rechargeables. Use them with a CP Card Photo Printer and you're ready to share photo prints with family and friends without having to visit a photo developing lab.

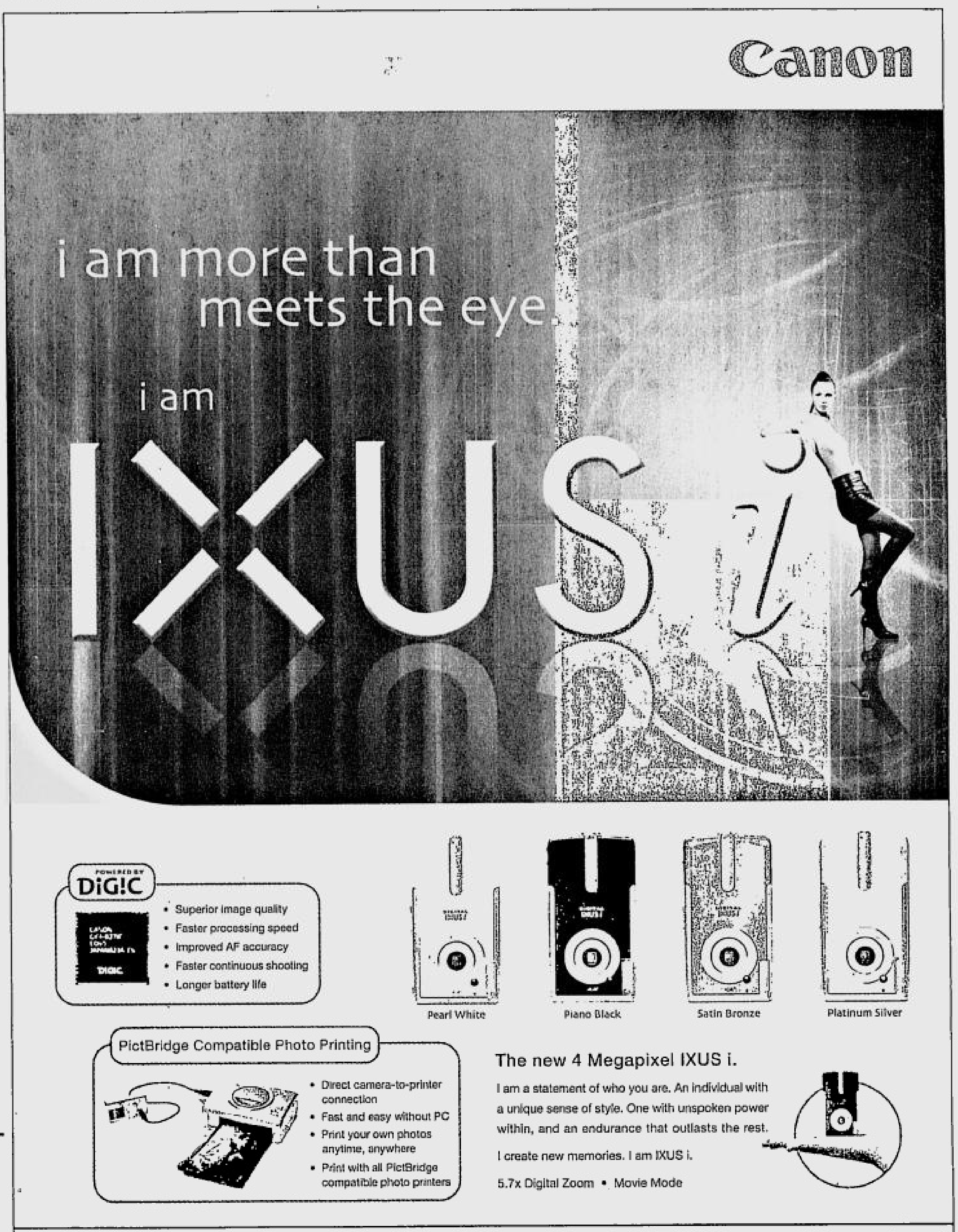


FOR BUSINESS PROSUMERS

Recommended Camera: Advanced

Users in this category will appreciate a full range of manual controls and accessory options for added flexibility when taking product shots or simple portrait shots. Prosumer, or professional consumer-type cameras form the middle ground betweem mid-range units and digital SLRs (Single Lens Reflex). This category caters to photographers who want high-end features in a camera without carrying the full load of professional equipments.

(continued on next page)



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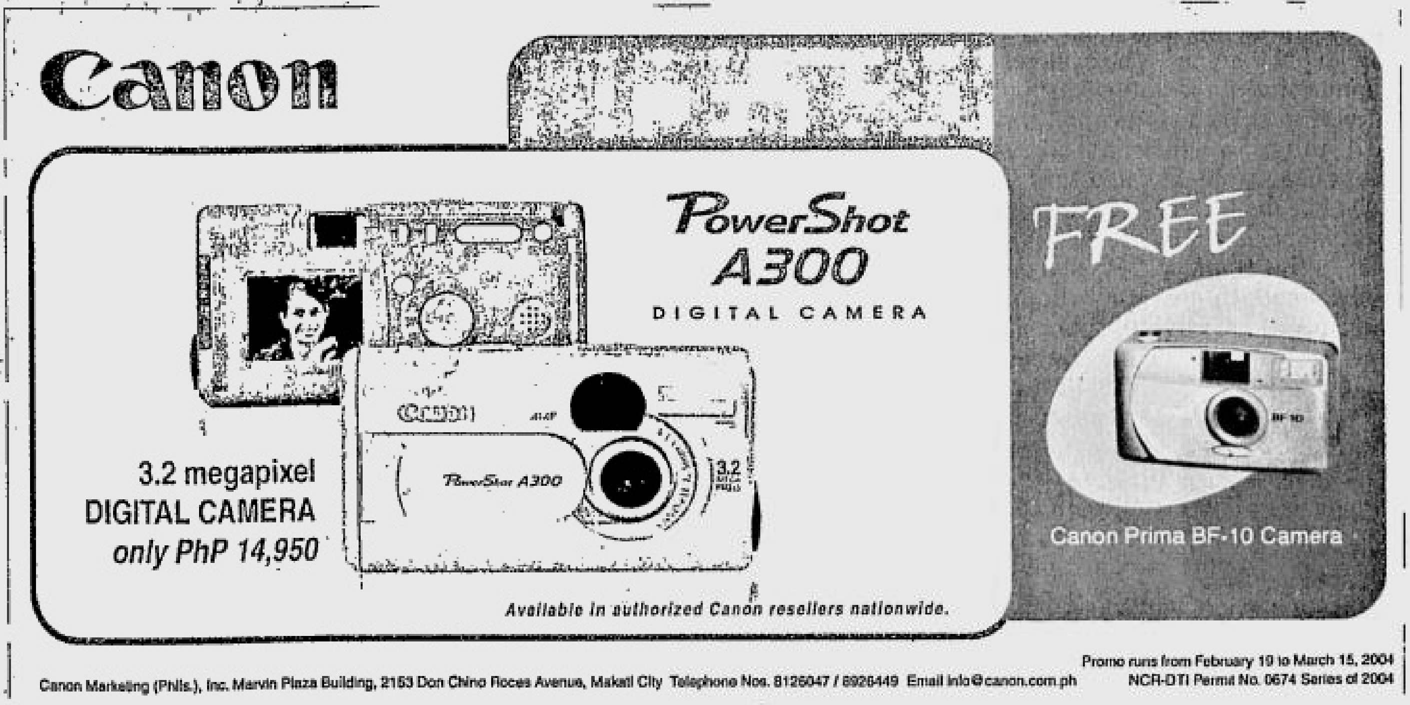

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The Canon EOS 300D Phenomenon:
Exceeding Market Expectations

Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. (CMPI) scores another milestone upon the release of the Canon EOS 300D, the world's first truly affordable digital camera. The release of the Canon EOS 300D has proven to be another gold mine for the world leader in photography after sales figures broke Canon's expectations.

During its launch last year, the EOS 300D was warmly received by photojournalists, professionals and enthusiasts who all marveled at its creativity and flexibility. Even then, many already placed reservations prior to the arrival of the units. From there, there was no looking back for the exceptionally-made digital camera.

By the time the units were sold in the market late 2003, people have already been clamoring for their own EOS 300D. "Reception for the EOS 300D surpassed our initial expectations," says Gelo Martinez, CMPI's sales and marketing manager for the Consumer Imaging and Information Division. "We were of course hoping this will be a hit among photography enthusiasts but what's happening now is far more than what we anticipated. What we have here—as we would like to put it—is a Canon EOS 300D Phenomenon."

Beyond expectations

Based on consolidated reports coming from the Canon regional headquarters, 70% of Digital SLR Users around the world have chosen Canon. This is further supported by the GFK Audit in 2003 in which Canon emerged as the preferred brand in countries such as Singapore, Japan, Europe and the USA.

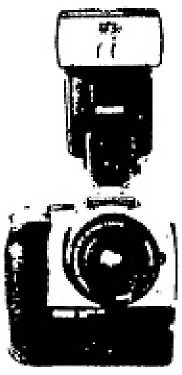
In the country, stocks of EOS 300D were constantly sold out while there's still a constant clamor for more—this according to reports from Canon dealers and other hobby shops. Further highlighting its dominance in the market today are the constant inquiries of interested customers about the EOS 300D. What's more surprising is that this came not only from professionals, but also from plain hobbyists and even students who wanted their very own EOS 300D.

Today, an increasing number of beginners have preferred to use a Canon as their first SLR (Single Lens Reflex) camera due to their confidence on the brand. From their film cameras, users will then move on towards digital photography due to the well-established EOS System. This is because SLRs, whether film or digital, use the same system of accessories and lenses. And like many Canon digital models, the EOS 300D features the direct print mode, allowing direct connection to any of Canon's direct photo printers.

The "Canon EOS 300D phenomenon" can be attributed not only to the camera's affordable price—retailing at only 70% of the lowest priced digital SLR then—but also to the fact that you don't need to be a professional photographer to enjoy an EOS 300D. Anyone who wishes to enjoy digital photography or take pictures the easy way can operate and use the EOS 300D. This is a fulfillment of Canon's aim to open the door of digital SLR photography to anyone interested in a higher level of photography.

Breakthrough

Customers preferred the 300D also due to its amazing package. The EOS 300D comes in an amazing kit containing its very own Canon EF-S 18-55 mm f/3.5-5.6 ultra wide-angle zoom lens. Specifically designed for the EOS 300D, the lens is matched for optimum performance with its CMOS sensor, plus it is more compact and lightweight than other lenses. The lens features a reduced image circle and shorter back focus distance optics optimized for APS-C size image censor. The Canon EF-S 18-55MM can only be attached to EOS cameras compatible with EF-S lenses.



EOS 300D DIGITAL

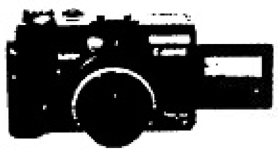
The features are nonetheless outstanding. Starting with its stylish Titanium gray metallic finish, coupled with its outstanding high-end features: a super fast 7-point wide area focus, simultaneous RAW and JPEG recording, continuous shooting, 12 exposure control modes, ISO range from 100 to 1,600, supports 2GB and higher capacity CF cards, among many others—the Canon EOS 300D is a sure stand out. On hindsight, this is a camera where the consumers are the big winners.

The EOS 300D will be among many other models of Canon digital cameras showcased at Photoworld Manila 2004 in Glorietta Activity Center, Ayala Center, Makati City from February 25 to March 1, 2004.

Which kind of...

(continued from previous page)

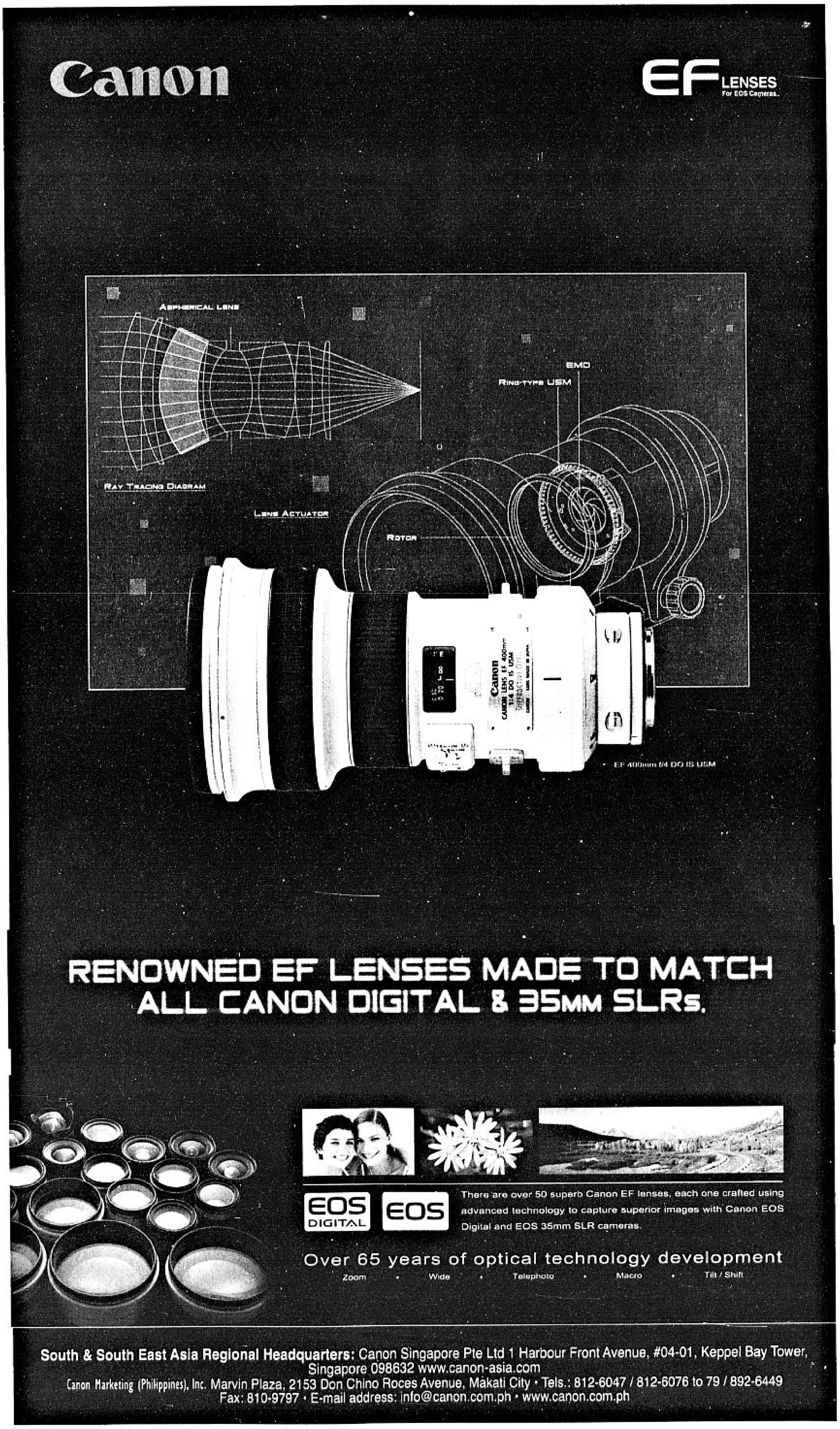
While most prosumer units include onboard lens and built-in flast units, users often have the option to upgrade the camera with add-ons. Typically, models in this range come with at least 3-megapixel sensors, more than 3x optical zoom and a larger and more comfortable grip for a sturdy feel.



FOR PROFESSIONAL USERS

Recommended Camera: Digital SLR

A must-have for most professional and hardcore photographers, digital SLRs are the ultimate equipment in digital photography. The cameras can capture image resolutions as high as 11 megapixels and typically sport the full range of manual controls, interchangeable lens and flash units –just like their film SLR counterparts. And with Canon's top-of-the-line EOS 1Ds, a full frame CMOS sensor has been used to provide the same dimensions used by full-frame 35mm SLRs. Generally, digital SLRs have been priced higher than many photographers could afford. But with Canon's commitment to cater to a wider base of photographers, recent offerings have drastically reduced the cost of entry into the digital SLR world.



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Canon PHOTOWORLD Supplement 2004

What is PictBridge?

You may have come across the word "PictBridge" while shopping around for a digital camera or printer. But what is it? If you have guessed it was a bridge of some sort, you're halfway close.

Why should you care?

With much industry muscle behind it, PictBridge is expected to become a defacto standard by 2004. To cut to the chase, let's take a look at how PictBridge can save you time and money.

- **More compatible**
  With the previous proprietary direct printing standards on the market, users had no way to output a photo using, say, a Canon printer or digital camera with another brand's peripheral. As PictBridge becomes adopted by more vendors, it will resolve this compatibility problem with its standardized direct print system. In other words, digital camera users can now connect directly to a wider range of printers for printing photos. The only conditions are that both the digital camera and printer have to be PictBridge –compliant.
- **Less wasted time, ease of use**
  PictBridge lets you output images from a digital camera to a printer quickly and easily in a plug-and-play process. Thus, it isn't necessary now to transfer pictures to the PC.
- **Offers versatile and attractive printing options**
  The primary function of PictBridge is to allow the user to print the images captured on the digital camera. Users can, however, also specify various print settings such as the size, type and number of prints for each picture. Additionally, the PictBridge system allows for:
  - ☐ Printing of index sheets (small thumbnails of the images),
  - ☐ Cropping an image before print,
  - ☐ Date stamping,
  - ☐ Image optimization,
  - ☐ Automatic printing using DPOF (Direct Print Order Format).

Do note that some manufacturers may offer additional proprietary features that are available only if both the digital camera and printer are of the same brand.

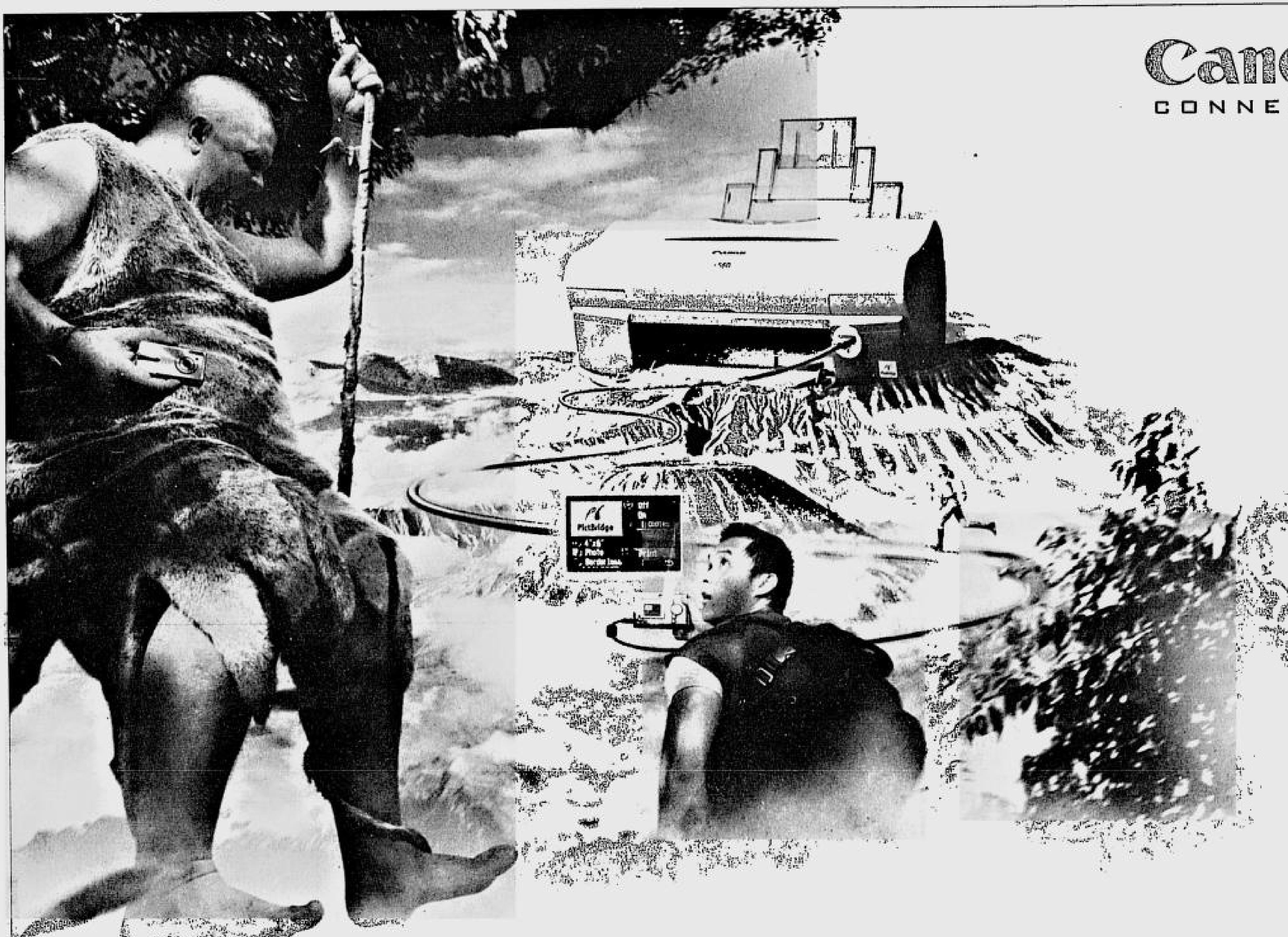
If a digital camera or printer is not PictBridge-compatible, there is no way the user will be able to have a direct connect solution between image input and output devices of different brands.

PictBridge printing with Canon in 3 easy steps

One of the key benefits of the PictBridge system is that it allows the user to print the images captured on the digital camera or camcorder, without a computer. This offers non-PC savvy users a less intimidating option to make their own prints. Here's how it works. For illustrative purposes, a PictBridge-enabled Canon digital camera and printer are used here.

1. Connect the USB cable from the digital camera to the printer. Switch on both devices.
2. Once the connection is established, choose the desired images via the camera's LCD panel and access the print menu to adjust the settings.
3. Select the "Print" option to start printing.

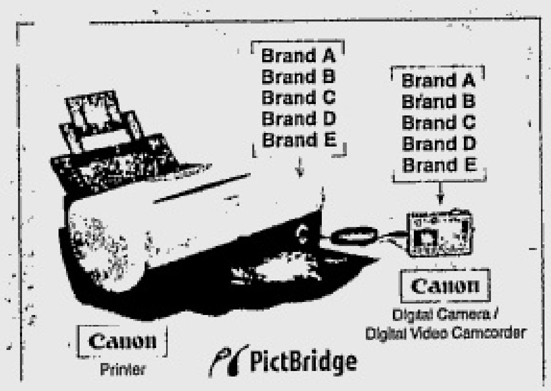
PictBridge



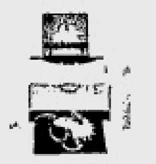
Canon
CONNECTS

New Canon PictBridge Photo Printers connect directly to any PictBridge-compatible Digital Camera or Video Camcorder!

Canon was the first to offer Camera Direct, allowing you to connect your Canon Digital Camera directly to your Canon printer. Now, Canon's latest photo printers feature PictBridge, a new industry standard that allows any PictBridge-compatible digital camera or digital video camcorder to be directly connected. The quality and convenience of Canon photo printers are now available to all. Make a direct connection with the new Canon iSeries printers, which produce MicroFine 2 picolitre ink droplets for exceptional detail. Coupled with 4800 x 1200dpi, speeds of up to 23 ppm monochrome / 16 ppm colour, and loads of creative software, the iSeries is your bridge to exceptional digital photographs. Or you can connect to the portable CP dye-sublimation printers to get instant photographs. Whatever digital camera you use, now you can cross the bridge to Canon digital photo perfection. PictBridge…no barrier!



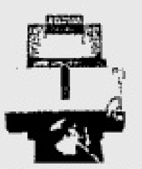
Exif Print



i455
- 2pl ink droplets
- Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution
- Up to 18ppm mono/ 12ppm colour

i475D
- 2pl ink droplets
- Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution
- Up to 18ppm mono/12ppm colour
- Card Direct printing (6 types of memory cards)

i560
- 2pl ink droplets
- Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution
- Up to 22ppm mono/15 ppm colour
- 4 colour inks (Think Tanks)



i865
- 2pl ink droplets
- Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution
- Up to 23ppm mono/ 16ppm colour
- CD-R printing
- 5 colour inks (Think Tanks)

i905D
- 2pl ink droplets
- Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution
- Up to 8ppm mono/7ppm colour
- CD-R/Card Direct printing (6 types of memory cards)
- 6 colour inks (Think Tanks)

CP200
- Portable & compact
- Prints 4R, 3R, card & sticker labels
- Fast printing in just 85 secs (4R)
- Superb photo-quality prints with dye-sublimation technology

CP300
- Portable & compact
- Prints 4R, 3R, card & sticker labels
- Fast printing in just 85 secs (4R)
- Superb photo-quality prints with dye-sublimation technology
- Portable battery pack

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Smile, because Canon's all new Camera Direct photo printers have arrived!

Fits right into your bag and your life.

The CP-200 and CP-300 Camera Direct printers are extremely light and compact, making them perfect to take on your travels or to a party. Take candid shots and hand them out. There's nothing better than sharing photos with people to break the ice. The Canon CP-300 is packaged with a rechargeable battery pack too, so go ahead and go crazy with happy snaps of your friends all day and all night long.

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

Why wait an hour for photos to develop? Just follow these 3 easy steps to see stunning prints in no time.

1. Connect your digital camera to your CP-Printer with a USB cable.
2. Select images and settings on your camera's LCD screen.
3. Hit the print button and voila! Beautiful true-to-life photos in less than 85 seconds.

You don't need a computer at all. But should you wish to print an image stored in your computer, just plug in a standard USB cable and you're good to go!

See the big picture. And the small one.

Blow Grandma up, or shrink Dad down to the size of a stamp. You have the choice of four different formats - namely 4R size, 3R size, card size and mini sticker labels. Perfect for your wallet or photo frame.

Simply picture perfect.

Print quality is nothing less than spectacular with the CP-200 and CP-300. Dye sublimation technology delivers a full spectrum of natural hues and shades, giving you great looking prints every time. Colour ribbon cartridges are easy to load, and won't cause any ink spillage.

Memories that last a lifetime.

Photo prints are of 300 x 300 dpi resolution, and are as sharp and durable as prints from film negatives. Transparent, protective overcoating covers the surface of each print, protecting it from the damaging effects of sunlight and humidity.

Direct photo printing is fun, fast and easy! So if you can't wait to see your photos, then don't. Visit your nearest authorised Canon dealer today and start making your life simpler and so much more enjoyable.

Canon

Now you can print direct from any camera with Canon's new PictBridge compatible photo printers.

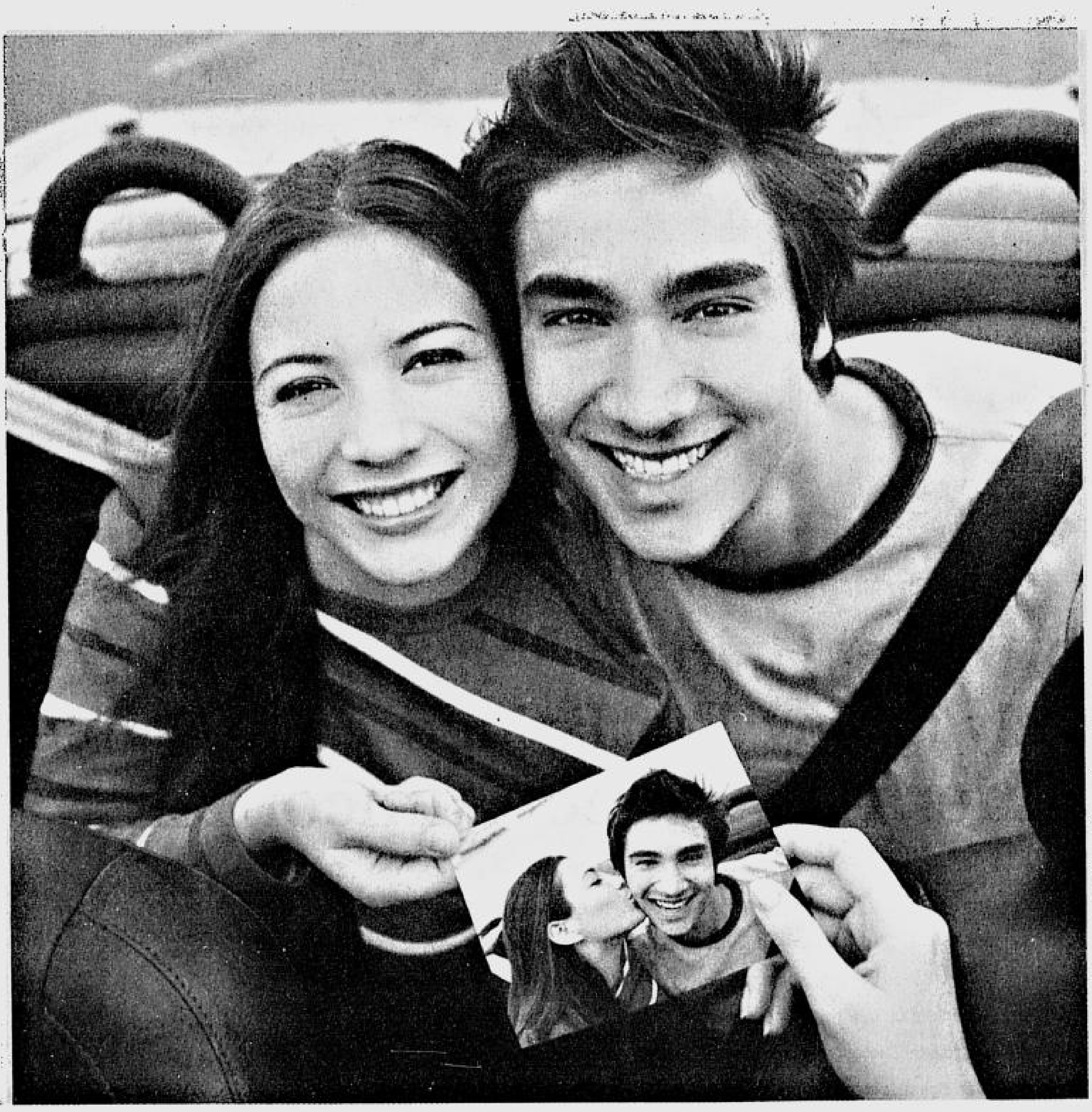
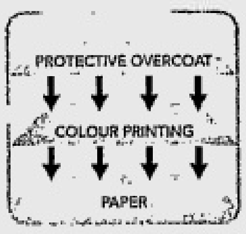


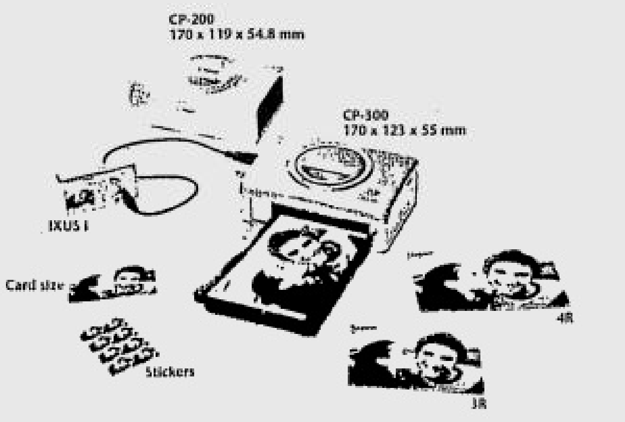
Photo printing just got easier with Canon's fantastic new Camera Direct photo printers. Created to add fun to any party, the portable CP-200 and CP-300 lets you see the photos you've taken instantly, in the form of beautiful prints just bursting with vibrant colours.

Simply snap a picture, connect your PictBridge compatible camera (of any brand) to the CP-200 or CP-300, press start and voila! One beautiful 4R, 3R, card or mini sticker label size print in less than 85 seconds. Every one of them laminated for protection against water spills, especially at wild pool parties! The CP-300 even comes with a rechargeable battery pack, for extended family fun time. So if you can't wait to see your photos, then don't. Visit your nearest authorised Canon dealer today and discover how fun, fast and easy it is to print photos yourself, no matter where you are.

PictBridge



Dye sublimation process



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